

The Odyssey of Jonathan R. (J. Ray) Bickel

A Pennsylvania Dutch Farmboy
from Berks County, Pennsylvania

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my son Jonathan who devoted many long ours transcribing and typing notes from my diary. He attended the first organizational 467th Bomb Group meeting in Hershey, PA in 1979 and numerous 2nd Air Division reunions. He is familiar with the crew, Colonel Showers, Colonel Holdredge, and many of the personnel of the 467th and 2nd Air Division. He has taken a ride in the B-24 All American and visited the 467th Airfield in Rackheath, England. He has visited the Cambridge cemetery, the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum and the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio. He has written a report on the B-24 and our battles in Europe. These memoirs would not be on the printed page without your efforts. Thank you and I really appreciate everything to bring my diaries to life.



Son Jonathan

Prologue:

I was born December 1, 1922 in a white, two-story farmhouse one mile East of Mt. Aetna, PA. My dad was Jonathan Bickel and my mother Sadie (Seibert) Bickel. I had a nine-year-old sister named Grace and a four-year-old sister named Irene. We lived on an 80 acre farm with 10 cows, 8 brood sows, and 500 laying hens. My father was well off and did not have any debts. His big pride and joy was a 1927 huge Willys Knight automobile. We sold milk to Hershey for \$2 a hundred pounds, the eggs to a huckster who took them to New York City once a week, and the pigs to a local butcher.

Each winter we would butcher a bull and several hogs. We always had plenty of meat, milk, eggs, and potatoes for dinner.

My sister Grace lives in a trailer on the farm (2003) and does her own housekeeping at 89. Her daughter June lives in New York City where she has pursued an acting career since graduating from Penn State University. Grace's son Starr and his wife Donnamary live in the farm house. He part time farmed and also worked in an aluminum alloys casting plant until retiring in 2002.

Family Farm



Jonathan Ray Bickel
Six years old

My sister Irene lives with her husband LaRoy Moyer in a house built on part of the farmland west of the big house. Their children are Robin, Kathleen, and Janette. My wife Lucy (Bamberger) Bickel and I built a new house, East of the big house and have one son, Jonathan Ray. Since my father's name

was Jonathan (no middle Initial) they gave me a middle name and in order to keep our mail separate, I used my first initial and middle name. Hence, J. Ray. Son Jonathan goes by his first name and middle initial. In the Army Air Force I used my first name on all documents. I guess we did not want a junior in the family as some people are called junior all their lives.

Life was good until that day on July 14, 1929 when men carried Mom out of the house on a stretcher. I was standing outside the shanty door on the east side when she looked at me from the litter and said lovingly "Be a good boy." That was the last I saw her alive. After the funeral Pop cried a great deal and I told him he could find someone else. That was a big mistake.

Grandma Seibert came and kept house for us for a year or so. Then Pop got a housekeeper. I can't recall her name, but the next one was Ethel from Ohio, about the time I was Eight years old. After she left, he brought Helen Burger (Zweizig) with two of her kids, Betty and Leatrice. She also had Ralph and Charles, who remained with their father. Things changed radically for

the worse around this time. She told Irene that the kids belong with their mother, and she intimated that she would not hesitate to put poison in the food to hasten that day. She packed great lunches for her kids, but my lunch consisted of a quart of milk which I took out of the milk house on my way to school. My liquid diet always left me hungry. Irene and I had a hot plate in the



Grandma
Amelia
Seibert

chicken house
above the pig

stable where we combined sugar and molasses, which we sneaked out of the house and made taffy candy. I wasn't taken to a dentist, and my teeth rotted at an alarming rate. Eight in the front had big holes between them so that by the time when I was fifteen they



Jonathan and Sadie Bickel
Parents of Grace, Irene,
and Ray

Row 1: Ralph, Me, Charlie, Leatrice, Betty **Row 2:** Irene, Fay, Helen



were pulled out and two partials were installed. Helen's first order of the day was to throw out all pictures and anything that could remind us of our mother into the burn barrel. Her next goal was to get rid of the kids. My sister Grace got tired of being pushed around and started to fight back. One time they were in the back room pulling each other's hair for dear life. I guess Helen won because shortly after that Grace left to live with Elsie Mountz and her parents about a mile away. Irene and I now had to fend for ourselves. Where was Pop? He occasionally became quite upset.

One of the biggest battles had us kids climb atop the chicken house roof for a great view. The fight was outside in the front yard. Somehow, when Pop gave her a good hit, her glasses flew out into the lane. He got his .25 caliber pistol out of his closet, and we traveled in the dark at a safe distance when he went to shoot her and himself, but the gun misfired and no one got hurt. He offered \$.25 to the lucky person who would find her glasses. He found them himself so we did not get the reward.

From first through sixth grades, I attended the school in Stouchsburg. Miss Mae Dietrich was my first and second grade teacher; third and fourth grades were taught by Miss Laura Webber; fifth and sixth were taught by Mr. William Dietrich, and Warren Klopp taught seventh and eighth. In first grade I had a rude awakening when Mildred Keener, a second grader, told me, "There was no Santa Claus."

I said, "Yes, there is a Santa Claus because God made Santa Claus when he made the world." But later on I found out that Mildred was right and there really was no jolly fat man in a red suit. Joseph Haak was my good friend and he took me to his house in Stouchsburg sometimes. Mr. Wilson was the shop keeper in the American House where we could buy penny candy if we had a penny. In those days people stooped to pick up a penny but now it must be at least a dime or a quarter.

Since money was very scarce, we could catch pigeons in the barn and sell them for .20 cents a pair. Sometimes Pop gave us a nickel on Friday, and that was a big deal. Hershey's Ice Cream was .15 cents a pint or two pints for a quarter.

Pop kept us busy in the summer hoeing thistles in the cornfield or

picking stones from one of the fields. TALK ABOUT BORING, no time for play. I can't remember a single time Pop played catch or anything else with me because we always had work to do. Then Helen's two boys Ralph and Charles came to live with us for awhile. They were nice kids and we got along well. Charlie had an express wagon and I wanted it, so I told him it was my birthday and he gave it to me. He was such a good-hearted soul, and I was such a liar. I'm sorry Charles.

About 1932 Pop had the bright idea to raise potatoes. He took Irene and me to the bank in Myerstown and got us to sign so he could get our money. This was our money, which was given to us over a period of years by relatives and grandma Seibert. I had \$40 and Irene had about \$120. Pop bought lots of seed potatoes, which we helped to cut up and plant in about three acres.

When it was time to pick them, we spent days picking them into bags, which we dragged along behind us. At about this time, the bottom dropped out of the potato market and we ended up with very little. I heard that the big farmers were paid to dump gas on their potatoes so as to decrease the supply even though people were starving. When we asked when we were going to get our money back, Pop said, "Eat potatoes, and I will give you a calf. When you sell it, you may keep the money." Well that never worked. It was always our calf, but it was always his cow, so we never did get any of our money back.

In 1933, when the Depression was bad and banks were foreclosing on farmers, several neighbors asked Pop to co-sign notes for them. He agreed, and as a result, we had a sheriff sale to sell all the livestock. All the cattle were loaded up and taken to someone else's farm one night. However, someone talked, and they had to take the cows back for the sale. That wasn't enough, so several months later they sold the farm to my Uncle Silas. I understood my Uncle Silas Bickel bought the farm with the idea that he would sell it back to Pop at a later date.

In 1934, Irene moved out to live at Aunt Ellen's when she was 15 and weighted 85 pounds. She had finished Stouchsburg three year high school and then went to live with Aunt Esther Lebo in West lawn so she

could complete her fourth year of high school. She went to Wilson High School and graduated in 1935, and Esther gave her lunch money to eat in the cafeteria. This money also helped to feed me as she sent me .30-.35 cents every week for my lunch when I lived in Florida.

In 1934 my father decided to move to Florida and take up the carpenter trade, which he learned as a young man because he could no longer own a farm in Pennsylvania.

We packed up and Rufus Clay went along. Rufus was our hired man and the son of our neighbor Cloyd Clay, who also worked for us during the harvest season. We settled near Pinellas Park, and I went to St. Petersburg Jr. High School in 7th grade. My most memorable event was getting into a fight with a kid named Lawrence. He said he was going to flatten my face like a brick wall. I had never been in a fight before so it turned into a wrestling match with all of the kids standing around in a circle yelling and cheering. No teachers came out and we were not punished, and Lawrence became my good friend.

One day I was on my bed on the front screened in porch when Helen told me to get off the bed. I was 11 and the last of the Bickel kids at home. I did not get off the bed, so Helen said she was going to put me off. I lay on my back and kicked. She got too close trying to grab me and I kicked her glasses off and they broke. When Pop came home from work, she and her kids told him what happened. There was no jury trial. He knocked me down and proceeded to kick the daylights out of me. From that time on I never went back into the house in the daylight as Helen also was going to beat me up if she could get her hands on me. We had a storage barn out back, and that's where I slept. I would sneak into the house at night and get some bread for jelly sandwiches as there were jars of jelly in the barn, which had been brought from home up North. I ran away from home one day and followed the railroad tracks but decided I better go back. Pop gave me no money because I wouldn't apologize to Helen, so I lived in the barn and they lived in the house.

Pop decided to move to Clearwater. He got a place along Gulf to Bay Blvd with a house, a barn, and ten acres of land. I had my place in the upstairs of the barn, which was accessible by a staircase with a door

at the top which one pushed up and it opened up on hinges like a trap door. At night I placed barrels of nails or whatever was handy on top of the door, so Helen couldn't get up. I also had an escape route out a window and across an attached shed roof to the ground. For food I had milk fresh from the cow. I would get up early and milk a quart from the cow before Pop came out to milk her. I washed my clothes in a bucket and even washed myself occasionally. I swiped oranges from the neighbors orchard and sneaked into the house at night to swipe anything edible like a couple pieces of bread.

So I was one sorry, dirty, hungry little boy going to Clearwater Junior High 7th Grade. I became friends with Billy Stich and got my mail at his house. Irene would send me .30 - .40 cents a week out of her lunch money, and I used to buy a chocolate eclair in the cafeteria for dinner for 5 cents. It was the biggest thing for a nickel on the menu and went a little way to ease the hunger pangs. I was always hungry, and all I thought about was food. Finally one day a teacher who reminded me of my mother, but I can't remember her name, kept me after class and asked me about my home life. After telling her, she said she would see to it that I got a free school lunch. God bless her.

At last, I got one meal a day, and the Stichs fed me also, so I survived.

One of my teachers was named Miss Tuttle, and she said, "The thing is; now here's the thing." That was quite profound now that I remembered that after 65 years. My chief memory of school in Clearwater was our industrial arts teacher. Mr. Padgett wanted me to square a board about 10 inches by 12 inches. I was stupid or didn't understand what he meant, but I spent the whole semester trying to square the board but never got it done. One day Billy and I cut classes in the afternoon and hitchhiked to Clearwater Beach. That was fun. I had six years perfect attendance up until this time, and I found cutting school a delightful experience. Jonathan found Billy Stich's phone number on the internet, and I called him on March 7, 1999. After 64 years it was great to hear that he was alive and doing well. His



William
Stich
My seventh
grade friend
in Clearwa-
ter, Jr. High

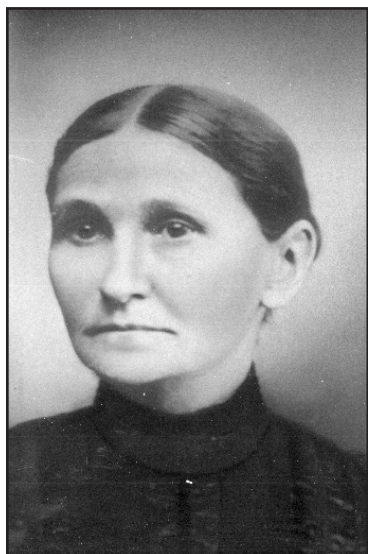
parents had owned a bakery and his mother always gave me something to eat. Billy remembered our I.A. class and where I lived on Gulf to Bay Blvd. He was in the Navy during WWII and now lives at 5164 Rosebay Terrace, Jacksonville, FL 32207. phone number 904-733-2542. That was a great phone call; unbelievable.

Then Pop said one day, "Aunt Carrie found a place for you to stay in Pennsylvania." Grandma Bickel was going to send money for my train ticket, and I was to live with the Paul Harnish family next to Carrie's, a mile south of Rehrersburg. One day he took me to the train station and gave me his most prized possession, his bronze-handled pocket knife. Before I got on the train, he asked if I had the knife. I reached into my pocket, and all I found was a big hole. I have never seen one like it at any antique market as I would love to buy one if I could find one.

By now I was twelve years old and had to change trains four times. In Washington D.C., I followed people who were going to New York City since I knew that was in the right direction for Philadelphia. In Philadelphia, I had to change to the Reading Railroad, and I think I had to change at the 69th Street Station for Reading.

I was taken to the Harnish family which consisted of Paul Sr., Paul Jr., Mildred and Anabel, and Mrs. Laura Harnish. I remember falling off a hay wagon half loaded with hay, and Mr. Harnish almost died laughing. I didn't think it was very funny. I don't know exactly what went wrong, but after about a month, Mrs. Harnish told me to get lost as I was not getting

Grandma Sarah Bickel



along with Mildred. I packed my meager belongings on my express wagon and trudged out the lane and up the road to Aunt Carrie and Uncle Howard Walter's place. She was working in the garden and I joined in hoeing weeds. She asked what I was doing there, and I told her that I had lost my not-so-happy home. She never hesitated but said I could stay with them. I had two cousins, Ed and Bob, who were two years and four years older than I was. Also Grandma Bickel lived here as well as an army buddy of Howard's named Bradford Knight Hutchinson. Brad received a small disabil-

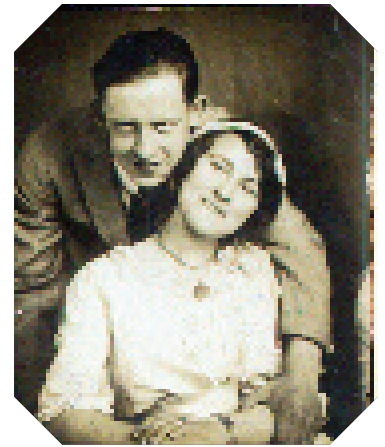
ity pension and worked for his room and board. Bob was the intellectual and since he was four years older, had little time for me. Ed and I got along quite well, though he quit school after eighth grade and did not go to high school. Uncle Howard and Aunt Carrie were quite kind and treated me as one of the family. The meals were great, and

I had clean clothes, and I finally could go to school in eighth grade in Rehrersburg without being embarrassed. I remember the Forensky boys, Ray and Merle Bickel, Clayton Goode, and Herman Smith as classmates. Mildred Harnish was also in my grade and Mr. Keeney was our teacher. After eighth grade, if you wanted to complete high school you had to find your own transportation to either Bethel or Womelsdorf. I went along with Howard to Rehrersburg when he took the milk to the creamery and then found a way to Bethel High School from there. John Stambaugh drove a bus and often took us (Jean Stambaugh and Paulene Shollengberger along to the Y, south of Bethel. From there Mr. Vernon Hiester, our social studies teacher, picked us up or we walked. Mr. Hiester had a

Uncle Howard and Bradford K. Hutchinson



Aunt Carrie



Aunt Carrie and Uncle Howard's Wedding Day

brand new 1939 Oldsmobile. I bought a \$3.59 pair of roller skates from Sears Roebuck and skated from Rehrersburg to Bethel, approximately three miles. I never owned a bicycle or I probably would have used that. I was 13 years old when I entered ninth grade in 1936.

My teachers were for agriculture Mr. Earnest A. M. Saphore, who was a WWI vet

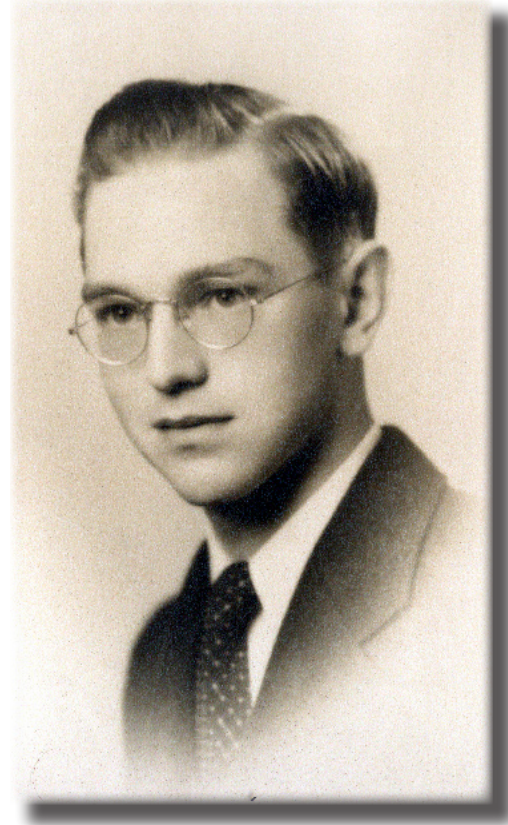
and tried to make us understand what it was like by having us take part in an assembly program. My Latin teacher was Maggie Y. Snyder. She was little, but we had a great class. Mr. Charlie Clemens taught math. He said, "If you can do one, you can do them all."

And he never gave a great deal of homework. Dr. Eugene F. Stoudt taught trigonometry and advanced math. He was also the principal, and although small in stature, he maintained strict discipline. Class members were Frances Yeagley, Margaret Courtwright, Arlene Brightbill, Marion Ebersole, Helen



Ed Walters

Edris, Cornelia DeRuyter, Helen Troutman, Eleanor Wilhelm, Clara Belle Frantz, and Edith Crouse. Edith quit in eleventh grade to marry her childhood sweetheart, Emanuel Ziegler. The boys were Claude Herrington, Ray Heiser, Lester Hauer, Allen Brown, Lee Stoltz, Ray Morgen, Robert Miller, George Kline, and Carl Ziegler.



Robert Walters

Claude Herrington, Raymond Stamm, and I had WPA jobs working in the school on Saturday mornings. Dr. Stoudt had this federal grant to help out poor kids. We emptied the ashes from the boiler room and dug out ground to make a recreation area in the school basement. Eventually we had several ping pong tables there for use during the lunch hour.

I was not a jock, but Dr. Stoudt had two tennis courts built and I enjoyed being on the tennis team. Arlene Brightbill was the smartest girl in the class. There were 19 in the class. We were constantly battling it out for first place. Our report cards showed each subject and gave a grade and class rank and the number in each class. It was not until the last report of my senior year that I had all A's and ranked first in every class. I was named valedictorian and Arlene was the Salutatorian, and we each gave a speech at commencement.

When I was in tenth grade, and a new kid came to ninth grade named Frank Orendo. We became best friends and he was responsible for getting me to enlist in the

Army Air Corps on November 6, 1942 in Harrisburg, PA. He had a neighbor named Joe May, who had a Model A Ford, and they would take me along sometimes to various places.

While I lived at Aunt Carrie's, my sister Grace and her husband Ralph Miller had bought the family farm. To get Sundays off, I would send her a card and ask her to call Carrie if I could have Sunday off. Then she would pick me up, and I had a break from the farm. My chores consisted of milking morning and evening and feeding the chickens. Cleaning chicken houses on Saturdays was my least favorite job.

I joined the reformed church in Rehrersburg and became the official organ pumper. I had to go behind the organ and move a handle up and down to get air into the system so the organist could play. I received \$12 a year for this job. I also got a little money from aunts like Harry's wife Anna, who gave me a \$5 bill when she came to visit. Uncle Harry and Aunt Anna lived in Firesteel, South Dakota and shipped horses east to Uncle Silas, who broke them and sold them. The horse auctions were very exciting and a big deal for us kids.

The medicine shows at the Mt. Aetna school ground and Rehrersburg were fun places to meet. The best place to socialize was at the Bethel Farmers Market on Wednesday evenings. Aunt Carrie took home-grown vegetables for sale. Most of the time I ran around with Frank Orendo and other classmates.

About in eleventh grade I sent for a Charles Atlas course and did the exercises religiously. I was tired of being the scrawniest kid on the block. I used to fill a quart jar of milk and take it down to a spring west of the barn for consuming later on in the day. I also took a cup along when I milked the cows and filled it and drank lots of warm milk. One day after



Frank Orendo

a cow put her foot in the milk bucket, and it was full of manure and straw, Uncle Howard dumped it into the milk can with the observation, "People will never know the difference after Hershey gets through with it." On Sundays the creamery did not take a sample to be tested for butter fat, so we skimmed the cream off the top of the can and used the cream to make ice cream and other good treats. Another trick was to always add a milk can lid full of water to each can. A little dilution didn't hurt, since we thought Hershey was getting rich by only paying the farmers \$2 for 100 lbs. of milk.

I wanted to learn to drive the old Dodge car, and finally Aunt Carrie let me try. I went west on the road in front of the house to the first crossroads and made a left hand turn and promptly ran up the bank on the left hand side. That was the end of the driving lesson for the day although I did eventually learn how to drive. I helped Carrie in the house to clean and prepare meals until she got a girl named Mabel Royer to help as her maid.

Brad got a job working for the Coca-Cola company in Reading. Each week when he make deliveries in our area he dropped off two cases of Coke. Since there were six of us, we each got eight bottles for the week, and that was a real treat. I've been a Coke addict ever since. Thanks



Sister Grace and Brother-in-Law Ralph Miller

Brad.

After high school, I got a job working for cousin Pearl Miller and her husband Leroy. I got \$5 a week with room and board.



their children Harold and Barbara

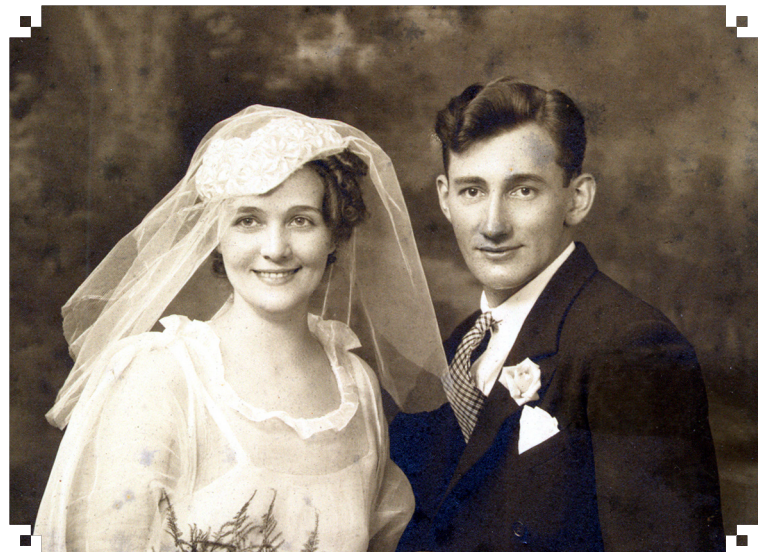


Leroy and Pearl Miller

Pearl was an excellent cook, and her Montgomery pie was the greatest. During harvest season we worked from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. Going to Hershey Park with the Sunday School and shopping in Reading were the highlights of the year. I especially liked the toy land on the sixth floor of Pomeroy's at 6th and Penn Ave. at Christmas. It was a kid's dream come true with electric trains, all kinds of toys and Santa Claus.

Cousin Grace and her husband Reverend Wilson Carvell who helped to arrange for my scholarship at Ursinus College.

I did get a driver's license and when I went to Grace's, I did drive their car. The first time I went out the lane and made a short right hand turn, which made the right rear tire run over a culvert pipe, cutting a huge gash into it, I felt badly as I didn't have money to pay for a new one, but Ralph never became upset or said an unkind word, and this was when I was 16 or 17 in '39 or '40.



Dr. Stoudt took me to Ursinus College and had his brother, Rev. George Stoudt try to get me a scholarship and a job. Pop made it perfectly clear that he could not help me. He was still in Florida and barely making enough to feed his family. So I remember having sixty dollars in the bank when I started college. I got a job in the kitchen pantry for \$200 a year and a \$200 scholarship from the United Church of Christ Synod. as I enrolled as a pre-ministerial student. Uncle Sam Seibert loaned me the rest. I also worked at any jobs available. One particular job was working for Walter Stumpf as a male model. He was a good artist and I posed as Michaelangelo's David. There I was, a little bashful farm boy posing in the



Mike Orendo, B-29 pilot over Korea, Dr. Eugene F. Stoudt, high school principal, and Frand Orendo, who encouraged me to enlist in the Air Force

nude for one dollar an hour. The total cost for the college for the year was \$650.

In the fall of 1940, at age 17, I packed my meager belongings and headed off to Ursinus College, 50 miles away. I was located in Highland Hall opposite the water tower. I was in a big room inside the entrance hall to the right with Paul Detweiler from Lansdale and Walter Ort from Rockville, Center, New York. It was a half mile walk to the main campus and my job in the kitchen. I worked in the pantry with Marion Stocker, John Baer, and Tommy Adams. Our job was to get the fruit cup ready and also the desserts. We had to wash the glasses and clean up afterwards. We worked under the direction of Mrs. Van Etten and Mr. Wiley. The whole operation was run by a Mr. Price. I was enrolled as a chemistry major with Dr. Pettit as head of the department. I liked chemistry but did not like being cooped up in a laboratory with chemical smells, so I switched to political science. My history teacher was Dr. Elizabeth White, who showed slides of ancient Greece, Rome, and etc. She brought all the ancient people to life, and I eventually received enough credits to be a history teacher. Dr. Clawson tried to teach me calculus. I barely got a D

in that class. Dr. Hartzal was the German teacher. Every time I translated a paragraph the other kids would laugh and say that it still sounded like German to them. I didn't know that I talked funny until kids pointed out words that we seemed to pronounce differently like "butter or coffee." I never did lose my PA Dutch accent.

I moved to Freeland Hall, third floor, with Bill Daniels as a roommate. We had a fun group of fellows on our floor. George Hosler the bell ringer was next door. Arno Kuhn and Salvador Avella lived down the hall. I didn't get too much studying done and was a C student.



Roberta Guinness



Elizabeth Burdan

In the spring of 1941 Roberta Guinness, Elizabeth Burdan, and five other girls said they were going to work at Loon Lake House in the Adirondacks as waitresses and would I like to come as a busboy. It sounded good to me, so I went along and became a bus boy. Loon Lake is located about 20 miles north of Saranac Lake, New York and catered exclusively to wealthy people.

Mr. J. H. Martin from Canadensis, PA was the head waiter. He was about 50 years old with a full head of white hair and looked very regal in his tuxedo. I often saw guests slip him \$20 bills. I received a dollar once from Mrs. Struck, who owned a woolen mill in Boston. She had blue



Loon Lake House Dormitory still exists even though the Loon Lake Hotel burned up.

hair and was very distinguished looking. Bill Birtley from Bloomsburg was my roommate. Ellis Talan and Joe Book from Boston lived next door in our dormitory. I had never known any Jewish people and I didn't know anything about them. They were just great normal kids like everybody else. I do remember Ellis did show me what a circumcised penis looked like, so I guess that is what made Jews different, but it made no difference to me.

I didn't make much money as a busboy, as the girls were supposed to give us a dollar a week out of their tip money. Mr. Martin got me on room service and also as a wine waiter at night in the bar. On my first night I had a tray of expensive champagne cocktails and started serving them from the far side. I had the tray partway on the table and after serving two or three the rest dumped all over me, a couple of guests, and the floor. The bartender was very unhappy as he had to furnish more champagne and the guests had champagne dumped on their laps and were not very happy.

Mr. Adler from Adler's Department Store in Savannah, GA was one of my breakfast guests. He was a slim elderly man in his late '50's, and he ordered four minute soft boiled eggs. They were placed in funny looking containers they called egg cups. At home we took a knife and whacked them in half and used the knife to scrape the eggs into a regular coffee cup. When Mr. Adler wanted me to break open his eggs into the little cups, I did the same things. Maybe one is supposed to take the top off and put the whole thing into the cup. To this day I have no idea what I should have done, but he never complained. He lived in a cottage detached from the main hotel. He invited me to visit him in Savannah, and I did one time. The store is still there, but the Adlers no longer own it.

Elizabeth Burdan used to get Dolly Madison Ice Cream shipped to her from Philadelphia, and she always shared it with me. Her parents owned the Burdan ice cream factory. She was a little, jovial girl and a lot of fun to be with. I went to see her in 1997 in Pottstown where she lives not far from the old ice cream manufacturing plant, which was no longer in business.

Mr. J. H. Martin ran the Hollywood Beach Hotel dining room in Hol-

lywood, Florida, and he invited me to come down to work during semester break during Christmas vacation in 1941. I thought it would be a good time to visit Pop and the family, so I bought a ticket on the Silver Meteor, a first class train and went to Florida during the Christmas break. Pop met me at the train station, but I can't remember where I slept. I'm sure it wasn't in the barn, but I don't recall being in the house. We had a happy reunion, and then I proceeded to Hollywood, Florida.

The Hollywood Beach Hotel was the grandest Hotel that I had ever seen. The menu had more items of food than I could ever imagine. I started as a roll boy. I had a container with hot charcoals in the bottom that kept the rolls hot on the shelves above. A flip top lid opened by lifting two handles at the side. My job was to go to a table, flip open the lid, and allow the guests to select hot rolls. Since people already tipped the waitresses, the busboys, the dining room captains, and the head waiter,



Hollywood Beach Hotel

they did not feel obligated to tip the roll boy, so I made little money, but it was a fun experience.

At Ursinus in the fall of 1941, I was in Freeland Hall with Fred Hidely as my roommate. He was later killed in action after enlisting in the army. Bill Daniels moved to Brodbeck and roomed with Ralph Mendenhall and Willard Lutz. Ralph had his own car and took me home once or twice in his model A. Ralph was a real good friend and has remained so during



Ray Bickel and Bill Daniels



Ray Bickel and Bill Daniels 60 years later



roll boy uniform



Ralph Mendenhall

the ensuing years. He became a lieutenant in the marines and now lives with his wife Marion Ocean City, New Jersey. Bill Daniels went on to become a minister in the United Church of Christ. He and his wife Jane lived and ministered to folks in Australia and China. They were in China when the Communists came and had an exciting time getting out alive.

When December 7, 1941 came, and President Roosevelt made his speech, I was serving dinner to the football team on Sunday. The college campus was caught up with WWII enlistment fever. Since I had a deferment as a ministerial student, I didn't rush out with the initial group of volunteers.

Martha Franklin



I had gone out for the freshmen wrestling team in the fall of 1940, and I pinned my first opponent in 33 seconds. I won two and lost two, but it was fun. I also went to South Philadelphia to sell blood. We got \$7 a pint and I only did it once or twice because it was not one of my favorite ways to make money. Bill Gentry lived next door to me in Freeland during my sophomore year. He and Gordon Cox had gone to Pennington Prep School. Bill lived in Morrisville and took me along home with him some weekends. His



mother was like the mother I had never known. She really treated me like one of her own kids. In Freeland, we had a cleaning lady named Martha Franklin. She had lost her husband and little girl, and so she became a housemother to us. She sewed buttons on clothing and repaired rips and tears. She loved to bake cookies and bring them to us. She read her Bible and prayed several times a day. She was deeply religious, made little money, and worked many long hours. We stayed in touch until her niece placed her in an old folks home. She gave me all her old Ursinus College Yearbooks, and she gave Jonathan her piano. Lucy, my wife, always took several cans of salmon since she loved pink salmon and couldn't afford to buy it for herself.

The summer of '42 was spent at the Manoir Richelieu at Murray Bay in Quebec, Canada. Mr. Martin invited Bill Birtly and me to serve as bus-boys and room waiters. The Manoir is an elegant hotel along the banks of the St. Lawrence. It catered to wealthy people and European royalty. We had Dukes and Duchesses, Lords and Ladies and the Patino family from Bolivia. Mr. Patino was supposed to own the Bolivian tin mines and said to be the world's fourth richest man at the time. I was impressed! I was

on room service and learned how to order breakfast for two and then a French-Canadian maid would unlock an empty room door and then we had breakfast together. She knit a beautiful pair of green socks for me which I never wore, and I still have. Len Tierney and Stuart Brown were two



Manoir Richelieu



of the Canadian boys that I can remember as well as several others.

Monica Furniss, a waitress from Montreal, was my main love interest. Mr. and Mrs. Leidy (he was a lawyer from Philadelphia) decided they would fly back to Montreal, so they gave their steamship tickets to their waitress and me. We had a great cruise up the Saguenay River before returning to Quebec. We had a room with twin beds since

we were supposed to be Mr. and Mrs. Leidy, but we managed to get a screen put up, dividing the room. We had a good summer before someone reported us to the immigration officials. We weren't supposed to be working in Canada without a work permit, but the summer was over and it was time to go home by the time they caught up with us.

Grace did my laundry all the years I was in college. I had a laundry suitcase, which I mailed to her, and after doing the laundry and ironing, she mailed it back to me. Irene was living in West Lawn and working in Reading, and I did not see her very often.

Dr. and Mrs. Franklin I. Sheeder were my advisors. Dr. Sheeder was also the advisor to the brotherhood of St. Paul. Mrs. Sheeder was my religion teacher and she arranged a field trip to the Philadelphia Art Museum and the Rodan Museum. That was a memorable event. After I came home from the service, I went to see them. I had written to Mrs. Sheeder several times but never received a reply. I distinctly remember greeting Mrs. Sheeder with, "You big louse, you never answered my letters." She was speechless, and I'm sorry that I was so blunt as I realized that she had many more things to worry about than writing to every kid in the service that had attended Ursinus college.

Fall semester of '42- my fifth and 19 years old was a great time living with Fred (Fritz) Roemer from Freeport New York in Derr Hall. I

used to enjoy visiting his family on Long Island. He had two brothers named Bob and Ed. Bob spent his summer of '42 with my sister Grace and the family. I never found out exactly how he enjoyed life down on the farm. Fritz was involved as a sophomore with trying to steal the freshmen president. I remember he was caught, and they covered him with molasses, sheep manure, and feathers. Now that was a sight to behold. I guess I really felt sorry for him after he broke his jaw and had his mouth wired shut for a couple of weeks. He and Helen were married in 1948 and now live in Northport, New York. I was an usher in the wedding and had a 1948 Oldsmobile convertible.

I was getting deeper into debt as my summer jobs didn't earn enough to pay my tuition. I hated borrowing money from Uncle Sam, so when Frank Orendo came and told me he enlisted in the Army Air Corps as an aviation cadet and was going to be a pilot, I decided to do likewise. It was on November 6, 1942 that I went to New Cumberland Army Depot and went through the tests. This was my first experience of lining up with a lot of other guys, turning my head and coughing while being checked for a hernia, and then bending over and spreading my cheeks. I passed and took the oath of allegiance. I was in, but they did not have room for us, so they said go back to college and we'll call you.

Sometime in the fall of '42 I found out about working at the Jacob's Aircraft Engine Factory at the east end of Pottstown. I signed up for a seven day a week job with time and a half on Saturday and double time on Sunday. I made lots of money operating a milling machine making connecting rods for aircraft engines. I think I rode with Ralph Mendenhall. We left school at 2 p.m., started work at 3 p.m., finished work at 11 p.m. and arrived at Ursinus by 12 midnight. If I had an 8 a.m. class, it didn't give me much time to study. College life did not exist. At the beginning of the sixth semester, I moved in with the Peter Spang family in Trappe. They were an elderly German couple, and I always had plenty to eat.

Charlie Hasson of Esterly was my boss at Jacobs. He set up the milling machines and supervised my work. The master rods were used in the Jacobs 450 h.p. engines, which were used in Basic Trainer 13's. I

received notice to report to Harrisburg on February 26, 1943, and I was off for an exciting career in the army. I paid off my debts and left.

Book II
Life in the Army Air Corps
Phase I

We left Harrisburg by troop train on February 26, 1943, and three days later arrived in Miami Beach, Florida. At first we stayed at the Broad Ripple Hotel, but then on March 8, we moved to the Sea Isle Hotel. the law of the land was laid down to us and restrictions were tough. One mistake by one person, and everyone gets restricted. We had three double decker beds to a room, and one of my roommates was named John Brenner. Lights were out at 9 p.m. On March 9, we went to a new drill field. We had physical training until 2 p.m. After chow we had another lecture about cleaning our rooms and the gigging system. Dick Fetter, Mark Reitz, and I went to the PX and bought barracks bags, ice cream and soft drinks. Then I marched around trying to learn facing movements. The next day I met Danny McGowan at the breakfast table. He was an Ursinus college dormitory friend. After drilling and chow, we had P.T. on the beach, and we went swimming afterwards. Dick Fetter and I went for our laundry, and were A.W.O.L from our mess formation, so we were put on detail mopping up the floor of the hotel lobby.

On March 11, we went to the drill field at 7:30 a.m., and drilled in mass formation until lunch. After lunch we got a lecture on gas masks and also on camouflage. That evening I ran downtown and saw "Random Harvest," which I thought was an excellent picture. The next day I woke up with a sore throat. I took some aspirins and went to the drill field. After lunch we went to the Atlantic Towers for a shot. Then we had a lecture on the U. S. rifle. We went to a nearby hotel for issues of missing shoes. I got gigged for having my barracks bag on the bottom of the bed. The next day we went to the drill field and had a parade. We had physical training on the beach, and Dick, Mark, and I walked down to Sixth Street and bought our usual ice cream and milkshakes. On Sunday, March 14, I went to the Methodist Church on Sixth and Jefferson at 10:30. I had a good lunch with pork as the main meat. I Went to the beach until 4 p.m. and got a terrific sunburn. Three P-40's came by about 10 feet above the water.

Al Gerberich and I went to the PX and bought candy, chewing gum,

and Cokes. Al had a farm west of Bernville east of the 183 split but passed away at 43. He was a real nice fellow, and we got along quite well. On Monday we went to the drill field and drilled until 9 a.m., had a lecture on the rifle until 10 a.m., P.T. until 11 a.m. and then had a parade on the polo grounds. I went to the barber shop with Gerberich and got a soft drink at the PX.

On the 16th we had fire drill at 11:30 p.m. We went to chow in class A uniforms and then put on fatigues and marched to the drill field. I went to the rifle range at 10 a.m., and shot 15 rounds with a Thompson sub-machine gun. I only got six hits. We had spare ribs and boiled potatoes for lunch, so I went to the PX and bought two boxes of ice cream for dessert.

On the 17th, we had fried eggs for breakfast, and I was the orderly for the day. We went to the drill field and paraded in ranks of 16 for the Colonel. I went through the chow line twice, and after we fell out with gas masks, we had a lecture with first aid and gas.

The next day I went through the breakfast chow line twice before going out to the drill field. We had close order formation with 16 men abreast. It was very hot and dusty. Sweat ran down our backs and into our eyes, and it was really hard to see. We got a lecture from Sgt. Mahr on general orders. That night we had no water for showers.

On the 19th we were back on the drill field at 8 a.m. It was very hot and dusty, and we still had no water for showers, so they allowed everyone to go swimming after 3:30 p.m. Dick, Mark, and I went to a U.S.O. show at Pine Tree Band Stand. They had six dancing girls, a singer, a violinist, and acrobats. I got a Coke and corn plaster patches for my feet before going home. The next night I went to the Sheraton Theatre with Al Blessing and saw the movie Keeper of the Flame with Spencer Tracy and Katherine Hepburn.

March 21 was the first day of spring. I couldn't go to church because I had to stay until 11 a.m. to sign the payroll. I expected to get paid \$30 and spend the afternoon on the beach. The water was quite warm, and after swimming several hours we went to the PX and got six big bars of chocolate. Al Gerberich went up to 41st Street and got ice

cream and nuts.

On March 22, we waited in line for a 1/2 hour for breakfast and then got oatmeal, canned milk, and an omelette. We went down to 15th Street and got examined for a hernia, color blindness, and a hearing test. We waited in line over an hour for our noon meal, and then we went back to the drill field and paraded from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

March the 23 was different. We got up at 2:35 a.m. and dressed in the dark. We marched to the 25th Street Mess Hall and went on KP (Kitchen Police) duty. I had a whole quart of milk at breakfast. My job was to pass out cups, and I didn't have anything to do most of the time. I helped to wash dishes and then went back to the Atlantic Towers for a shot in each arm. The right one hurt, but the left one got stiff later.

On March 24, we went out on the drill field at 7:30. We had a real good dinner of pork, beans, potatoes, fruit salad, soup, and bread pudding. My flight number was 638. After lunch we had a lecture on military courtesy until 4 p.m. Every flight except three got shipping orders. I was on guard duty again, but I got out of it somehow. I bought two Nestle bars in the PX and a chocolate milk.

On March 25, we got our shipping orders. We got all shined up to parade for the Colonel. My cap wasn't very clean, and at inspection Colonel Harris and Colonel McNair said 638 was the best looking flight while we were standing at attention. Then we paraded and did our stuff for the other flights. We passed in review twice before Major Coffee and looked real sharp. I went through the chow line twice after that and had a good dinner of roast beef, mashed potatoes, and corn. We were confined for our quarters for the night. The next day we were still in Miami Beach and out on the drill field by 11 a.m. We had P.T. at 3 p.m. but were not allowed to go swimming. Chow was not very good, so I went to the PX and bought 10 Baby Ruths and 10 packs of Chicklets. Dick and I went to a T.V. show in the day room. The next day we had a parade one more time for Colonel Kimberly, and then we were restricted to our rooms. I went to the roof of the Sea Isle at 7:30 a.m. for a last look at the sunrise over the Atlantic. We were called out at 10:30 a.m. for shipping orders and short arm inspection. I went to the roof again at 1:30

p.m. after packing my barracks bag. We fell out in the lobby at 3 p.m. and were assigned busses to take us to the military depot. At 9:55 p.m., our train pulled out. We were in a Pullman car, and I was in the upper berth and Dick Fetter was in the bunk below.

On the 29th, we got up at 6 a.m. We passed through Jacksonville at about 7 a.m. and then headed northwest through Waycross, GA, Tilton, Albany, Americas, and Columbus. We arrived at Opelika, Alabama at about 3 p.m., and at dusk we arrived at Birmingham, where we stopped for awhile. On the 30th, I spent the day playing checkers with Gerberich and Fetter on a checker board Al and I made from cardboard. We rolled across the Mississippi to St. Louis about 7 p.m. We crossed the Ohio River at dawn, and pulled into Cairo, Illinois at dawn. We arrived at Rock Island, Il at 10:20 a.m.

Phase II -College Training Detachment at Augustana College

On March 30, 1943, our troop train pulled into the station at Rock Island, Ill at 10:20 a.m. The townspeople gave us a royal reception, not a ticker tape parade, but the next best thing. We were going to study at Augustana College, (a small liberal arts school with about 500 students), until there was room in the pipeline to send us onto flight school. We were C. T. D.'s (college training detachment trainees) stationed at the college to attend regular college classes. We had double decker bunk beds in a big building next to the gym.

On March 31 we were up at 6 a.m., got a good breakfast, had another physical exam and spend the rest of the day in the barracks writing letters. Our meals here were better than home or any the army had to offer. One meal consisted of Virginia baked ham, mashed potatoes, peas, milk, break, butter, and cake. Another time we had T-bone steaks, peas, potatoes, strawberry shortcake, milk, and bread and butter. We could always go back for seconds on every item. We loved this place. It never could get any better than this.

April 8 was our first day of school. I had geography, physics, and was to start history on the 26th. When we weren't in college classes, we

had lectures on military courtesy, gas masks, etc., physical training and maneuvers on the drill field.

Our P. T. consisted of lots of calisthenics; running, crawling, and piggy back riding. We had good workouts all to get us ready for our (P. F. R.) Physical Fitness rating tests. These tests consisted of pull-ups, sit ups, and running an obstacle course. I could do 100 sit-ups, 19 pull ups, and run the course for a total score of 170.

We did not get free time. Sometimes we were restricted to campus but on weekends we could go into town to the movies and church. The church people were very friendly and made us feel like we were part of the family. We often stayed for dinner in the church basement and socialized with members of the congregation. It was a good place to meet some of the local girls who were available for dates at the Y. M. C. A dances.

One day I went on sick call for a rash on my left foot. I was told I had athlete's foot, which came as no surprise since we all were barefooted in the communal shower. I went on sick call again three days later and was told I also had warts. Eventually I was sent downtown to Dr. Barwasser's in Moline. He treated my foot under an ultraviolet lamp or whatever. It seemed to help as I haven't complained about it since.

The most exciting part of C. T. D. was the flying time in a Piper Cub. We were taken to a civilian airport and had civilian flight instructors. We were to get 10 hrs of stick time. We also had ground school when weather was too bad for flying. My instructor's name was Mr. McVey and I went up for the first time on Tuesday, March 11. I felt a little sick in my stomach after I was up about 40 minutes. It was great. I did turns, banks, dives, and flew on a straight and level course. On the 13th, I went up again and did coordination exercises, which made me, feel sort of funny. I did climbing turns up to 3000 feet and never did throw up even if I may have almost felt like it.

Friday the 14th was my last day of flying as we received our shipping orders to go to San Antonio for classification. I got two more hours in which gave me a total of 3 hours and 40 minutes. I did S turns, and tried to do figure eights. My instructor said, "You'll make a darn good

pilot. Take it from Pappy; he knows.”

Ronald Kane, Al Gerberich, Mark Fetter, and Mark Reitz were my chief buddies. I forgot to mention that on April 14, I started getting swimming lessons. My teacher was LeRoy Karlstrom, a senior college student of Swedish descent. He was handsome with blond hair and blue eyes. He worked hard with us and was a really nice guy. There were lots of Swedes in this part of the country, just as there are lots of Germans in PA. Dutch country. Berks, Lebanon, and Lancaster Counties of P/a I was 20 years old and couldn't swim. Le Roy had us use the kick-board and hang on to the side of the pool, and we learned.

On Sunday, May 16th, we boarded a troop train and pulled out at 10 a.m. I had an upper bunk and slept quite well the first night. We stopped for breakfast in Kansas City, Mo. We continued to and had our next meal at Newton's in Wichita, Kansas. We got to Oklahoma about 10 p.m. and woke up in Texas. The next morning we had breakfast at Milans in Fort Worth and continued to Temple for dinner. We rode the train until 4:30 p.m., and then got stranded in a little town until 2 a.m. The next morning Reed Robertson and I went to chapel and sang some hymns. The minister's brother talked to us for a while. Next the postmaster took us out to his farm and showed us his livestock. Then he threw a pad over his black filly and left me ride out to the pasture to bring in his milk cow. Yippee! The first day in Texas, and I'm riding a horse. The cactus and hundreds of other wild flowers are blooming all over the place. This was so great. We're really “deep in the heart of Texas.”

The train pulled out and on May 19 at 10:30 p.m., we arrived in San Antonio, at 7:30 a.m.

Phase III

Classification – Pre-flight at SAACC (now Lackland) San Antonio, Aviation Cadet Center – May 19, 1943

We arrived in San Antonio at 7:30 a.m. and were loaded into three army trucks. This is a huge base with dozens of double decker barracks

one story tar paper shacks and dozens of tents. Short arm inspection first and then we were given bedding and assigned to Squadron 107 and barracks 6536. Our first meal was fairly good, but it was so ungodly hot that all we could do was drink a lot of water and punch. Next it was out to the P.T. field for calisthenics.

Our next day was one of those keep busy days like we used to do at home. After remaking our beds three times it was time for some serious work. We picked stones on one side of the barracks and piled them on the other side. We also were told that the army didn't have lawn mowers and we were to be human lawn mowers. It was line up on our hands and knees and move along pulling blades of grass.

The next morning I woke up with cockroaches crawling all over me in bed. I had never seen a cockroach before, but they had lots of them in Texas.

For the next couple days, it was grass detail, sitting around writing letters or playing chess. The barracks were on legs and there was a two to three foot crawl space under them. Taking a page from my sister Irene, I carried a Reader's Digest in my pocket and when it was safe. I'd crawl under the barracks in the shade and read. It used to get hot as blazes and the air was nearly saturated, so I left the eager beavers pick rocks and pull grass in the hot sun.

On Monday, May 24, we had one solid day of verbal exercises. The next day it was the psychomotor tests. These tests are tricky; the one consisted of sticking a rod into a two inch hole and hold it steady. If the rod touched the side of the ring, a bell would ring and a light would flash and then someone would say "Times UP." It seemed the rod was magnetized because it was always jumping to the side and ringing the bell. The next test was to give blue and yellow pegs half turns so that all the yellow sides would be away from you and then turn them so all the blue sides would be away. There was a time limit on all these tests to see how we'd behave under pressure. The next test was reaction to red and green lights and my reaction time was rather slow.

The next test was following a copper spot on a phonograph record with a stylus. Not easy but the worst one was a coordination machine

with left hand threads. The idea was to keep contact with a little brass disc. The last test was coordination in an airplane with a stick and rudder. One had to match green lights with red lights. It was exciting and challenging and easier than the exam with the psychiatrist.

One Wednesday, the 26th, we had the first part of the so-called 64 physical to determine if we were fit for flight duty. It started out with chest X-rays, a bottle of urine and a blood sample. Next it was onto the psychiatrist. I had a first Lt. grill me and I was completely screwed up. He wanted to know why I wanted to fly and about my personal life. I had to go back for a recheck at 1 p.m. I went back at one but waited until two to see the Captain. I was so nervous that I was shaking like a leaf. I had never spoken to a Captain before and thought he must be some kind of god. He proceeded to talk me into being happy with a ground duty job and I guess he almost convinced me. The advantages of being an officer were better pay - \$250 a month vs. \$50 a month, better living conditions and sharp uniforms. I couldn't tell him that. I had to make believe that I was born to fly.

Thursday we went for the second part of our physical. This time it was an examination of teeth, nose, ears, throat, eyes, blood pressure, pulse, hernia, and reflexes. Wt. 155; height 5'10" etc. I got through fine and was placed in class one. Then it was back to the psychiatrist who told me that if nothing was said about G.D.O. (ground duty only) I'd better get out before he changes his mind.

Mike Balhorn

It was grass pulling and mess duty which was pretty much fun. I got a job painting – a desk, a garbage can, and four boxes. The sergeant was a real nice fellow and saw to it that we had plenty to eat.

We were placed in barracks in alphabetical order. One of my good friends was Mike Balhorn from Waterloo, Iowa. We played chess, went on open post into San Antonio and went to movies on post. We were together in flight school, and we keep in touch.

On June 1, the list of those assigned to flight school was posted. I was classified as a pilot, but also scheduled for re-



check before the medical board. The next day I went before the medical board for a recheck. They looked at my papers and said that I was to have G.D.O. so I told them that I had been classified as a pilot, but the Captain said that was a mistake. Next he took me back to see the Captain who had given me my recheck. We had another fatherly talk, and I finally convinced him that they had made a mistake. He asked the same old questions, but this time I had a cool, casual answer to all of them. So finally he said he was going to give me a chance to fly. Well, I shook the old boy's hand, smiled, and beat it out of there before he changed his mind. After that, Mike and I went to a movie to see Mission to Moscow.

The next day my name was on the clothing issue list and also on K.P. (Kitchen Police). The mess Sgt. told me to go get my clothes and so at last we traded our old clothes in for Cadet uniforms. There was the cap and hat with Cadet insignia. We wouldn't be allowed to wear them until we got to Pre-Flight. I felt like Jason when he finally captured the Golden Fleece. We were also issued a khaki shirt, a pair of pants, white gloves, work gloves, and shaving kit, comb, six handkerchiefs, five pairs of socks, one undershirt, and one pair of shorts. After that it was back to putting on our fatigues, picking stones and grass. The Texas A and M boys loved picking stones. They got their hands full and all ran to throw them on a pile at one time and give a Texas A and M cheer.

On Tuesday, June 8th I had guard duty. Guard duty was for a 24-hour shift. We would walk a post for two hours and then be off for four hours to eat and sleep. As soon as the four hours were up, we had to march around the post to relieve the men on duty. I first learned the "Manuel of Arms." After inspection by the Officer of the Guard, I was escorted to my post at 1:30 PM. Marching for two hours under that Texas sun was no fun, and I was so thirsty that I didn't feel like eating, but I could drink glass after glass of water. We ate in the officer's mess, which was a cut above our mess hall. My shift from 8 to 10 went much faster. I slept a bit until 1:15 AM and then walked my post from two to four. My legs were tired, and I had enough guard duty to last the rest of my life.

On Thursday, I had to take an I.Q. test again and didn't do very well. I finished in time to catch the bus with Mike and one of his friends for San Antonio. We first visited the Alamo and saw the guns, knives, and clothing of Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie. We also followed the San Antonio River through the heart of town along the river walk. I split and went for a hair-cut and an ice cream sundae. I checked out Joske's department store, which called itself, "The biggest store in the biggest state." I got back to the post about 8 PM and found out Mike and I were on guard duty again tomorrow, Friday the 11th.



At the Alamo

I received letters from my sisters Grace and Irene and also from Marion Stocker, Martha Franklin, Dottie Ohlmyer, Ralph Mendenhall, Fritz Roemer, Arho Kuhn, Dick Reid, Bill Daniels, Frank Orendo, Fred Carney, my father and others. So it was great to get letters, but I also had to write to all these people and tell them of my activities.

On Tuesday the 15th, I got paid \$50 and also got put on K. P. We peeled about 150 gallons of potatoes. I operated the scraping machine and had a great time. The next morning I got up at 4 A.M., but the C. Q.(Charge of Quarters) overslept and so did all the cooks. My duties were to peel and slice carrots and avocados. The K. P. pusher gave us fly swatters and chased us out to the back porch to sleep. The good thing about K. P. is we had plenty to eat and drink including fruit, milk, and ice cream.

I went into San Antonio again on the 17th and went out to Breckenridge Park and the zoo with Mark Reitz. I also saw the movie "Five Graves to Cairo." The 18th was memorable because we all went on strike (except flight 11) , and we didn't eat anything in the mess hall. The officers and non-coms were furious, and we had to go through the mess line and sit at the tables. I guess they dumped a lot of food into the garbage cans, and things seemed to improve after that.

At 2 P.M. on the 19th, it was back to K.P. again. K. P. was a lot of

fun especially raiding the ice cream freezer. I had 8 blocks before the day was over and plenty of other food.

A parade was scheduled for the 21st, but many of us didn't go. The whole squadron walked tours. A tour consisted of walking for an hour in a designated area with a backpack; we did make our officers look bad since only about 16 out of 90 in our barracks showed up for the parade. I also got C. Q. charge of quarters duty when the regular C. Q. had guard duty. My job required that I had to get all the sheets and pillowcases and count them. Then I got clean ones and distributed them.

On the 24th I went to San Antonio again. I got a haircut for 65 cents, went to the Buckhorn Saloon which has hundreds of mounted horns from various animals and the Hernandez Cathedral. Mike bought a ring for his girlfriend Dorliss, to whom he is still happily married.

On Wednesday the 30th of June, we were up at 4 A.M. I packed my bags, ate chow at 6 and went back to bed. We had lunch at 11, and then we were marched across the street to Pre Flight. At last we are Aviation Cadets.

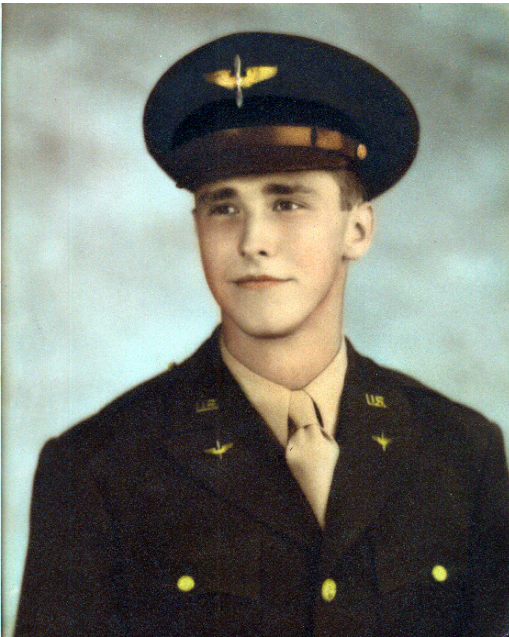
Phase IV— Preflight at SAACC

It was Wednesday, June 30th that we became official Aviation Cadets. Our barracks were tarpaper shacks like our chicken houses back

home. There was no water, toilets, or anything. The

toilets and showers were located in a community building about 75 feet away. We were issued shorts and now walk around in them with our shirt collars open. We have single beds and footlockers.

On Thursday, July 1, I awoke dead tired because my bedsprings were so worn that it was like sleeping in a hammock. We arranged our footlockers until 10 and then had to fall out for a lecture on guard duty. Next we went to the mess hall for dinner, which was beyond belief. We had beefsteak, peas, mashed potatoes, corn, salad, olives, rolls and



Graduation Picture from Preflight

butter, cake and ice cream. This was like dying and going to heaven except after dinner we had to march around on a dusty field. I got an awful headache from the awful heat and the dust.

Next, we had a lecture by a Lieutenant Smith who gave us such a good pep talk that morale was raised by at least 200%. I went to the P.X. (Post Exchange) with Chase and Clark, but it was so full that it was hard to get in to buy anything. Then it was off to the community showers which were so full that one had to be careful not to be washing somebody else's back.

The morning of July 2nd, Friday, I woke up early full of bites. I had a lot of itchy red spots but never did see what caused them. I doused the spots with Listerine and went to breakfast. I learned that the insects that bit me are called "Chiggers." They are tiny insects that crawl on your skin and suck blood leaving an itchy red spot. I never did know how to get rid of them. It was out to the drill field for close order drill from 11 to 12 and then more lectures on military courtesy. After chow, it was off to the service club for an orientation lecture. A lecture on P. T. (Physical Training) and then one on guard duty followed this. I drank a quart of chocolate milk besides eating supper and was sort of bloated. Next we scrubbed the barracks and washed windows in preparation for inspection tomorrow.

On Saturday the 3rd, we had inspection and drill. We policed the grounds around the church and had a lecture on the honor system. A cadet could be eliminated from the program for cheating, stealing, lying, or allowing another cadet to do any of those things.

When we left classification, we left K. P. and guard duty behind. Our pay was raised to \$105 a month, but we had to pay for meals, which left us about \$85.00 a month.

On July 5th, we had two classes in naval identification. Silhouettes of Japanese warships were flashed on a screen, and we had to identify them. Next, we had Morse code class and learned six letters and then on to math class and then a lecture on the pressure chamber. We also had P. T. and various lectures, all designed to keep



LLoyd Doke

us busy, and we could sleep at night because we were dead tired. We also had drill and practiced for parades.

On July 7th, Lloyd A. Doke came to live in our barracks. He was from West Plains, Mo., and we got along famously. We shared pictures, letters from home, and played chess on a small board that he brought with him. He later got killed when his BT-13 took a dive on Dec. 31st. His family gave me his chess set and aviation cadet P. T. shorts. It didn't pay to make any close friends as they usually got killed or moved away.

The pace became routine with cross-country runs, physical fitness tests (I got a superman rating) math class, ship identification, code etc. I passed the code test, only missed one letter and only missed 2 ships out of 18 in the Naval test. We had our pictures taken in our class A uniforms, and I wrote and received letters when not playing chess with Lloyd.

On July 16th, I ran the cross country in 13:16, The 100 yd dash in 12.2 and the broad jump at 8'10". We were given "Open Hill" which meant that we could go anywhere in the "Pre-Flight" compound. Truman O Andrews from Eire, PA and I went to the movies to see "Harrigans Kid." Lloyd had a headache for several days and finally went on sick call on the 14th. They say he has pennmouitis and made him go to the hospital. I got a haircut which left me about 1/4" of hair and made me look absolutely bald. When I went to visit Lloyd in the hospital, I was not allowed to see him so we started writing letters to each other. He was to stay in the hospital for a month.

I got paid \$40.07 on the 16th and saw slides of first aid in the base theater. Next we had the roughest P. T. I ever had and then GI'd the barracks. G I (Government Issue) meant using a scrubbing brush and cleaning the floor thoroughly. We had to get ready for the big inspection, which followed the parade on the 17th.

We were in parade formation at 7:40 and got inspected and then it was back to the barracks for another inspection. I had to make up my bed with a precise 6" collar of sheet turned down which is not easy. I had to polish my shoes shine my brass, shaved, (cut myself twice)

mopped the floor twice, tied up my barracks bag, hung up my pants and changed to regular clothes.

Next, it was off to the pressure chamber. The pressure chamber was like a big pipe lying on its side with a cap at one end and double doors on the other end. The double doors formed an air lock so someone could enter or leave the chamber during a training exercise. We sat in two rows facing each other, and then they closed the doors and started the exhaust pumps. I went to 18,000 feet without an oxygen mask and then to 28,000 feet with a mask. Our flying altitude in B-24's was 23,000 to 24,000 feet, and we were always told to put on the oxygen masks above 10,000 feet.

On Sunday, July 18th, I went on sick call for my jockstrap itch. It was hot in Texas in July so one of life's little pleasures was to get a container with ice and coke and drink it in the barracks during the evening hours. On the 22nd Lloyd came back from the hospital and is OK. On the 24th, we had P. T. over the cross-country course in the afternoon, which it was ungodly hot. Finally someone got smart and we had P. T. in the morning at 8 and ground school in the afternoon.

July 30th we had open hill and prepared to ship out to flight school. My name and Mike's were on a list assigned to the Spartan School of Aeronautics in Tulsa, Oklahoma. On the 31st, we got on a train and headed to Tulsa.

Phase V - Flight Training at Spartan School of Aeronautics

We arrived at the Spartan School of Aeronautics located at the south end of the Tulsa Municipal Airport on August 1, 1943. There were 145 Cadets in our class of 44-C. There were 34 civilian flight instructors and Mike and I were assigned to Mr. Williams. During the war, Spartan trained more than 16,000 pilots.

Training was in Ryan PT -19's (Primary Trainer), low wing, open cockpit, 2 seater (1 behind the other) aircraft with 175 horsepower Lycoming engines. After primary, cadets moved to another field and flew basic Trainers B.T. 13's (Basic Trainer) and then to advanced training



Primary Trainers at the Spartan Aircraft School of Aeronautics (PT-19s)



in Advanced Trainers. A. T. 6's. Mr. Williams was quite patient with me as I flew dual for 18 hours and never soloed. We had a single seat belt to hold us in and that didn't seem too sturdy when flying upside down. We



Cadet Benny with Flight Instructor
R. R. Golem

practiced S turns, climbing, diving and hedge hopping over the clouds. One of my big problems was not knowing when to pull out of a dive. I was told to pull out of a spin after 1.5 – 2.5 or 3 turns. I had no clue how many times we spun but was told to watch the section lines. What was a section line? The farms were laid out in one-mile squares consisting of 640 acres with lines North and South and East and West. We do not have section lines in Pennsylvania, and I never did figure out when to pull out of a dive except when the ground seemed to be getting too close for comfort I pulled up. I also had trouble in landing, as my depth perception was not what it could have been. I used to pull the stick back too soon and stalled out 25 to 30 feet

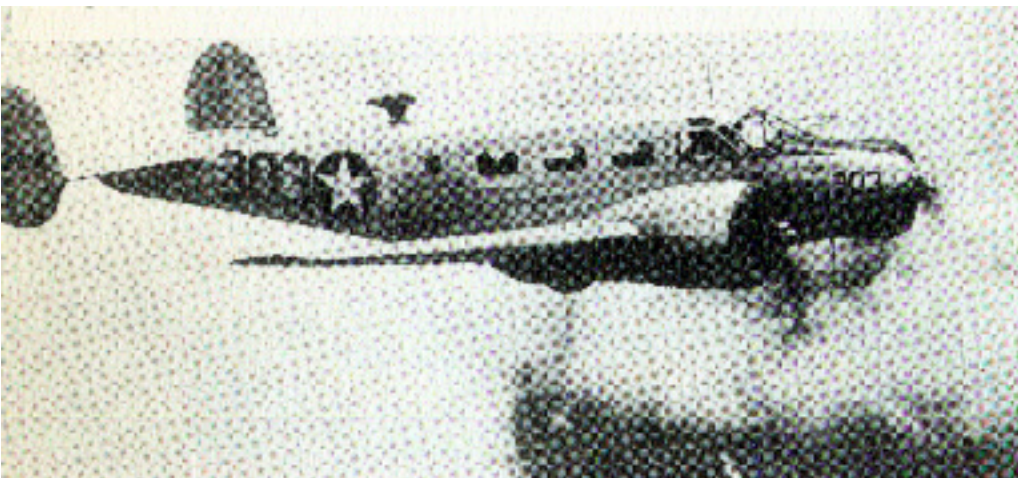
above the runway.

Mike soloed with only seven hours of instruction with Mr. Williams, so I guess I wasn't born to fly. I was "washed" out and asked for Navigation School. On October 22, I left Tulsa for reassignment to San Marcos, Texas navigation school.

Tulsa was a friendly town. There were dances at the Skelly mansion and the Philbrook art museum was a great place to visit. The food

and barracks were great and the girls cruised downtown and picked us up on Saturday nights.

AT-7 Navigation Training Plane



Phase V - San Marcos Navigation School
Nov 3, '43 - Feb 26, '44

At San Marcos, we were assigned to an echelon, which consisted of 40 Cadets. There were 9 echelons in training in our group and since we were in alphabetical order, and we were assigned to double decker bunks, William L. Bieber from Denver, CO. Was in the upper bunk. He had a great sense of humor and could keep us in stitches. There was also a W. R. Biles, Russell Bonfanti; and Edmund F. Boomhower. We were assigned to fly our navigation missions in AT-11's and had 3 cadets, an instructor, and a pilot per plane. We were to get 100 hours in the air practicing dead reckoning (time X speed and compass heading for a position) pilotage, (looking for landmarks on the ground) Radio and finally Celestial (observing stars and calculating position by lines of position obtained by taking readings with our sextants. All these methods were so that we should determine where we were and when we would get to our destination. A fix was a point of longitude and latitude where we were supposed to be at a certain time. When we flew a mission we were given a destination and then had to plot the compass heading to give the pilot. We calculated the miles and airspeed allowing for wind and had to give an Estimated Time of Arrival (E T A).

We were graded by how close left or right or over or short of our destination we were when our E.T.A. ran out. Most of our trips were over West Texas to El Paso, Amarillo, and Odessa, etc. There were very few lights except for occasional lights from oil wells burning waste gas. Biles, Bickel and Bieber flew together on most of our missions.

Larry Fick of 2624 12th Ave. Forest Grove, OR 97116 graduated class of 44-5. I met him in Austin, Texas at one our 2nd Air Division Association meetings in 1998. He wrote a book entitled World War II in Europe and A Farm Boy From Oregon. He gave me a copy and the following paragraphs are from his book. I have changed the date of arrival

Larry Fick and me



and the class number to coincide with my dates. The rest is Larry's from page 24, 25, and 26.

I went into San Marcos to order my uniform sometime near the middle of January. The tailors took precise measurements so we would look really sharp. Hart, Shafner and Marx made the uniforms and the pants were a pinkish color. We also ordered an overcoat, hat, cap, three wool

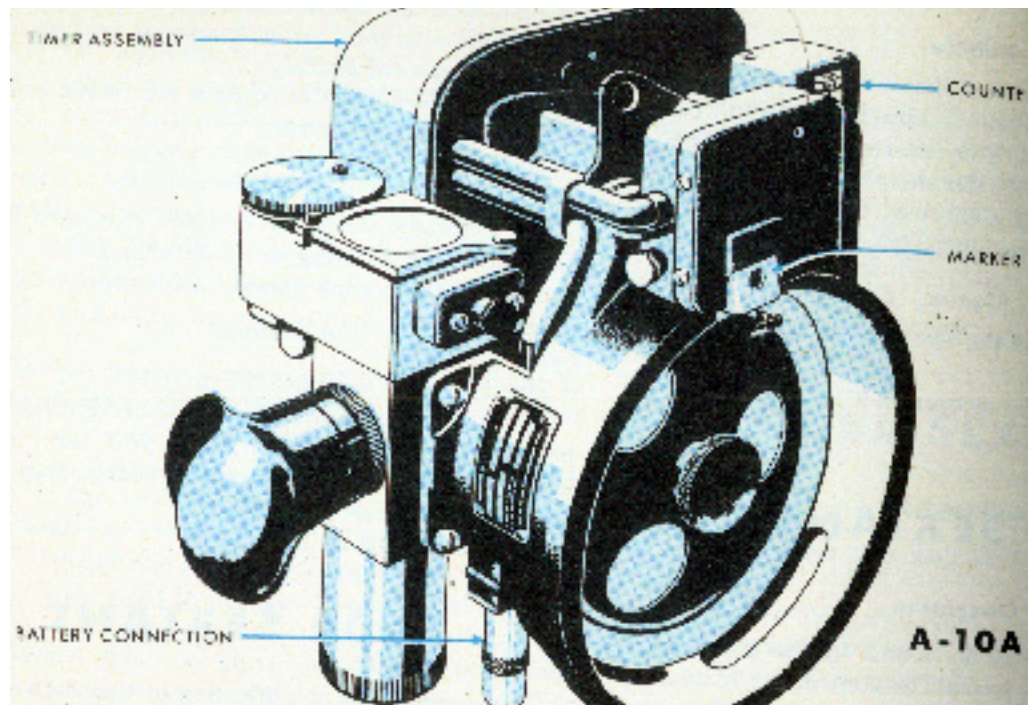
Matt Wolfe wears my uniform after talking to his 7th Grade History Class



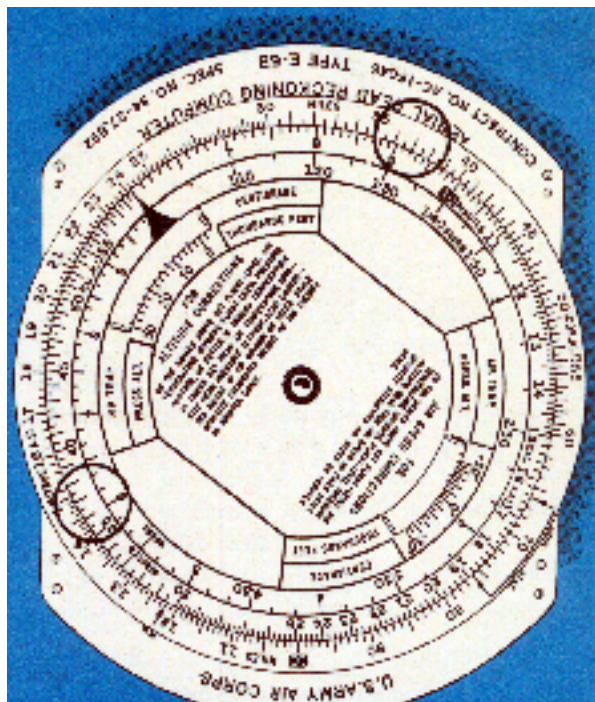
shirts also in green or pink and three pair of wool gabardine pants. My pants had a 28-inch waist and I still have them though it's been many years since I wore them.

My 7th grade neighbor Matt Wolfe wore the uniform to a history class while I gave a talk on World War II. My talks to local school students consist of showing navigation tools and explaining how they were used and their application to my job. I have a “weems” plotter, an E6B circular

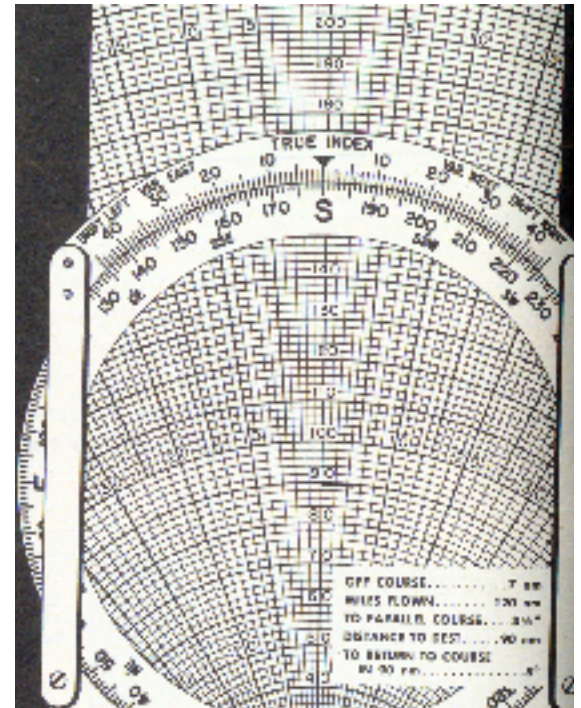
calculator, and A-10 Fairchild sextant, dividers and navigation charts. I have a student model my uniform and one to wear my A2 flight jacket. The jacket has a painting of our B-24 “Slugger Jr” and is in excellent condition. I also show a clip from Col. Mahony’s home made video of one of our combat missions and talk about the purpose of our missions. The students are quite attentive and ask interesting questions.



A10A Sextant Instrument for taking Celestial readings on the stars



E6B Front



E6B Reverse

Finally on February 26, 1944, we had graduation day. We were sworn in as officers and presented with our silver navigators' wings. Bill Bieber pinned my wings on my blouse and I pinned his on his blouse. Some fellows had family members or girlfriends there to do the honors, but since Bill was my best friend, I was happy to have him do it. He had told me about Pikes Peak, the Garden of the Gods, and the Royal Gorge,



Home on Leave



Graduation Day with my new uniform as a 2nd Lt.

Row 1: Unknown; Sgt. Harold D. Meintz, MI; Chief Engineer S/Sgt Gardner Gilmore, CA; Nose Turret Gunner Cpl. Bernard J. Farrell, N.Y. Row 2: Co Pilot 2nd Lt. Raymond M. McTyre, GA; Radio Operator and Top Turret Gunner S/Sgt. William A. T. Cassidy, Ct; 2nd. Lt. Pilot Glenn D. Young II; Navigator 2nd Lt. Jonathan R. Bickel, Pa; ; Waist Gunner Sgt. John P. Bosko, N.Y.;



which I have visited on a trip out West! Receiving those wings was the greatest achievement in my life up to that time. We worked so hard that it was a dream come true and a moment etched in time that I should never forget.

Next up we got our orders for joining a crew, and I was assigned to Westover AF base at Springfield, Mass. I had a day delay enroute plus three days for travel. This gave me time to show all the folks at home my new uniform and silver wings.

Westover A. F. B. Springfield, Mass.

Phase VI - Westover Air Force Base Springfield, Mass - March 12, '44

I arrived there on March 12th. It's about a six to seven hour drive from my home, and that's where we were to become a combat crew and train as a team. Special Order 92 dated April 1, 1944 had our crew listed as follows: Pilot Glenn D. Young III; Co Pilot Raymond M. McTyre, GA; Navigator Jonathan R. Bickel, PA; Bernard J. Farrell, N.Y.; John P. Bosko, N.Y.; Bernard C. LeBar, PA; and Harold D. Meintz, Mich. I do not know when Cassedy, Gilmore, and Schumacher joined the crew, but Bill Cassedy lists the crew members ranks and positions as follows: Lt. Young, Pilot; Lt. McTyre, Co Pilot; Lt. Bickel, Navigator; Lt. Schumacher, Bombardier; S. Sgt Gardner Gilmore, Crew Chief and top turret gunner S. Sgt. William A. T. Cassedy; Radio Operator Sgt. John Bosko,

Assistant Crew Chief and Waist Gunner; Sgt. Harold Meintz, Tail and Ball Turret Gunner.

Bernard J. Farrell, Nose Gunner and Bernard C. Lebar waist gunner. He also states that in case of emergencies the bombardier took over as nose gunner or navigator if needed. The radio operator took over for the top turret gunner and for the crew chief in the cockpit.

Bernard C. Lebar was killed on the plane he was riding in on his fifth mission when he was shot down. Glenn Young, our pilot writes, "I still



Bernard C. Lebar

feel lousy about that whole deal. When we were getting ready to leave Westover, Lebar introduced me to his mother. She took me aside and asked me to please watch out for him. He was her baby, and she couldn't bear the thought of losing him. I told her I would do the best I could. I also told her that I didn't think she need to worry as I had every intention of coming back. Well, I had no idea that he would sign up to fly with a make-up crew when we were stood down. When he told me what he'd done, I ordered him to go take his name off of the list. He didn't do it. We were stood down (we weren't going to fly that day). He was signed up to fly. The next mission call was a maximum effort and we flew. I tried to get him off the make-up crew but couldn't because the plane we were flying had no belly turret. That left me with an extra man. If I had forced the issue, they'd have forced Meintz to fly the make-up crew, and that wouldn't have been fair to Meintz. Lebar called the shot. I still feel bad about the whole thing. If you recall, we were leading the low left element that mission. Lt. Love, the pilot of the plane Lebar was on, was flying off our left wing. He got hit over Wessermundy and lost an engine. Love tried to keep up but kept falling back. I contacted him by radio and told him to abort but he wouldn't and kept on until he was forced to fall back. By that time he was too far into Germany and you know the rest. Lebar was living out his destiny. He has to get himself off of our crew to do that although he didn't know what he was doing. But he had to separate himself from the rest of us because we all came back. I'm sure he understand that now, but I'm not so sure his mother understood. She must have had some premonition that she would never see him again. I guess it still haunts me and I guess it always will."

Either waist gunner could sub for the tail gunners while a waist gunner could be back up for the radio operator. Either pilot could fly the ship but Crew Chief Gilmore had some pilot experience and his assistant Sgt. Bosko was a rated pilot instructor for small planes. Sgt. Bosko kept excellent records and some of the information he gave me indicated that we flew 95 hrs between April 6th and May 28 on 21 training missions.

Training consisted of shooting landings and take offs, practice for the gunners who fired at targets towed by a B-25. Sgt. Cassedy stated



Sister Grace, me, and sister Irene
June 3, 1944 - Home on Leave



Starr and June Miller

that one time our left inboard engine started vibrating violently and had to be feathered. (Feathering means turning the propeller blades perpendicular to the path of travel so they would not spin in

the wind and cause the plane to vibrate.) He said that some gunnery specialist back at the

base had not properly synchronized the propellers with the twin 50-caliber machine guns and as a result the props had nine holes in them. It was almost like shooting yourself down. We had day and night navigation-training missions with the Quabbin Reservoir being a great landmark.

On one of our night missions, we took off to find my home. My sister Grace and brother-in-law Ralph Miller and their kids June and Starr had taken over the old family farm. We had 150 foot long chicken houses on the East and West sides of the homestead. When the house on the east was filled with baby chicks, lights were burning all night. We came from Springfield to Easton and Allentown and things were confusing as the lights from one city blended into the next. Reading was off to our left, and it was off to Myerstown. We flew in from the south and Glenn went down and turned the landing lights on. We went right over my home and had to pull up so as to avoid the Blue Mountain north of Bethel. That was a thrill.

It was not nearly as thrilling as the day some hot-shot crazy pilot who had just returned from over-seas climbed into the co-pilot's seat on the pretense that he was going to give Glenn a check ride. We left our training area and headed to Montauk Point of the Eastern Tip of Long Island. The radio operator was to send in coordinates making believe that we were still in our flying area.

Well, this crazy pilot went down to 500 feet and proceeded to make

a 180-degree turn to the right. Not a little turn, but a tight turn that made me think we would not have enough lift under the wings to keep us airborne. I was glued to the windows as we headed into N.Y.C. He took us to the Newark Airport where we did a 180-degree turn, then turned into N. Y. C. and flew up 5th Ave at a level with the people on the observation deck of the Empire State Bldg. We went straight north to Yankee Stadium where we did another 360 before heading for Westover. Glenn can verify this flight, as I am not sure which enlisted men were on board. I was about as scared on this joy ride as I ever was on a combat mission.

Finally on June 3rd we were given a six-day leave before shipping out. I took Bill Bieber along home and the folks had a great time enjoying his quick wit and sense of humor. My sister Irene had saved some gas coupons, and my cousin Lester Klopp who had several trucks gave us all we needed. We had great home cooked meals in spite of rationing of sugar and other foodstuffs.

Fritz Roemer
College Roommate



J. Ray, nephew Starr, and Bill
Bieber



We took the train from the Reading Station and got back to Westover on June 9th. We had spent D-day at home, but they saved some of the war for us.

We reported to Mitchell field on Long Island on June 12th where we were assigned a brand new airplane. We were not to take off for a few days so Glenn and I went to Coney Island for a day and enjoyed some of the rides. I know we were on the parachutes and the Cyclone. Another time we stayed overnight in the Commodore Hotel.

Saturday June 17, 1944- Alerted today and load-

ed plane in afternoon. Waited for Fritz at night, and then called up and met him at Hempstead. Bought some lipstick there and came back to the base. Went to the cafeteria in the officer's club and out to the plane and then we talked until 2. a.m. Then I went to bed.

Sunday June 18- Up at 5. a.m. and got our final briefing so we took off for Dow Field in Bangor, Maine at about 8 a.m. We got to Bangor after 12 p.m. but fooled around at the plane so long that we were last at the processing line. Got to our barracks at 4:30 p.m. and then had mess. Got a supply of gum and went to a show.

Monday June 19 - Got up at 4. a.m. and then went to briefing at 6 a.m. Took off for Goosebay, Labrador at 8. a.m. and arrived there at 1:30 p.m. Barracks were very comfortable and the scenery was quite impressive. Passed over thousands of lakes and mossy country on the way here. Went on GCT officially and also went to bed at 9 p.m.

Tuesday June 20 - Got up at 11 a.m. and felt good after fourteen hours of sleep. Went fishing this afternoon but didn't even cast a line since I sat in the sunshine mostly. It was very warm. Young said, "Gilmore is going to the hospital for at least two days." So maybe Bieber and Bonfanti will take off and catch up with us. It's 10:20 p.m. and still twilight.

Wednesday June 21 - Got up at the usual time, had lunch, and went swimming in the river. It was cold but it still felt good. I hope we're still here tomorrow, so we can go swimming again. Plenty hot here today, one of the hottest days of the year.

Thursday June 22 - Rained during the night but cleared up by early morning; Departed at 3:20 p.m. and landed in Greenland at 6:30 p.m. Went to a show and the PX after getting billeted. It was a beautiful sight when we first saw the icecap and the glaciers. BW-1 Field is situated on a fjord at the foot of a glacier. We were going to take off immediately for Meeks, but a telegram called it off. The fjord is full of icebergs and

fish. The PX is the best I've ever seen in many-a-day.

Friday June 23 - Took off at 630 a.m. for Meeks Field, Iceland. Flew through the undercast and overcast nearly all the way and read drift on the clouds. Came in 0 - 10 E.T.A. It was windy and cold when we landed and almost blew us off our feet so I wore all of my flying clothes. We slept in quonset huts with a kerosene stove in the middle. It was awfully stuffy, and I got a bad cold.

June 24 Saturday - We stayed on the Post waiting for take off. The PX wasn't any good. We slept in cots. The latrines were very stinky, and the food was just so-so.

Sunday, June 25 - Played cards after staying there all day.

Monday, June 26 - Woke at 7:30 a.m. and took off at 11 a.m. for Nutt's Corner, Ireland. We got some Kronas as souvenirs. Landed at Nutts at 4:30 p.m. after some awful flying through icy conditions. Finally got out of the storm at 1000 feet near Nutt's. Ireland is quite beautiful. Our quarters were huts, but only four to a hut.

Tuesday, June 27 - Shipped out by train, then by boat, then by train to Stone, England where we were to get processed again.

Wednesday, June 28 - Arrived at 10 a.m. after spending the night on the train. They gave us the rest of the day off so we just lay around.



Thursday June 29 - Had orientation lecture, medical and gas lecture. Went to a show and the P-38's buzzed the field.

Friday, June 30 - We were alerted so we shipped the baggage out at 1 p.m. Got paid \$86, played cards in the evening after going to a show.

Maj. Fred Holdredge
Squadron Commander

Saturday, July 1 - Shipped out by 8:30 a.m. by train to

Warrington where we were billeted for the night. Awaiting further shipment by air to someplace in England.

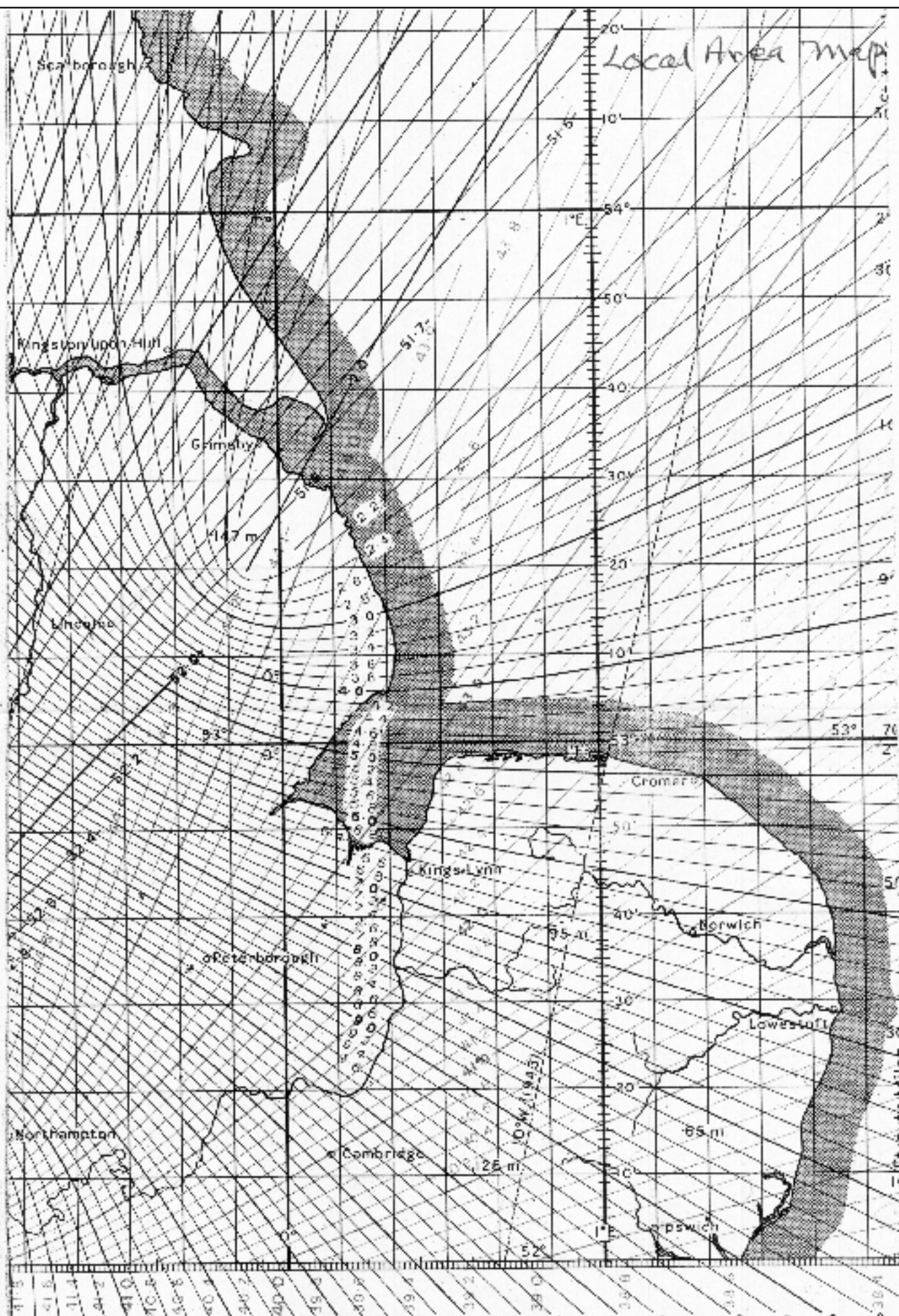
Sunday, July 2 - We were sent to Rackheath Air base four miles northeast of Norwich. We were assigned to the 467th Bomb Group, 790th Squadron under the command of Colonel Albert J. Shower. Our squadron commander was Major Fred Holdredge and our Group Navigation Officer was Major Caper Holmes. Rackheath was the name of the park and small vil-



lage of the estate of Sir Edward Stracey. His large Georgian house stood in the center of the park. The gate way to the estate had a set of gates brought from Paris by Sir Edward and called the Golden Gate. The estate had a lot of beeches and chestnuts trees. I picked up a box of chestnuts and sent them home to my sisters. Unfortunately they all turned moldy by the time they got home. Our local chestnuts were killed by a blight many years ago.

Norwich is an old city and has an 11th century cathedral. Its spire was a notable landmark when we were flying practice missions. The 2nd Air Divisions. The B-24 groups of the 8th Air Force were located about the city. The 96th Wing had three groups north of the city. The 466th at Attlebridge, the 458th at North west, Horsham St. Faith on the northern outskirts and Rackheath about 7 miles north east.

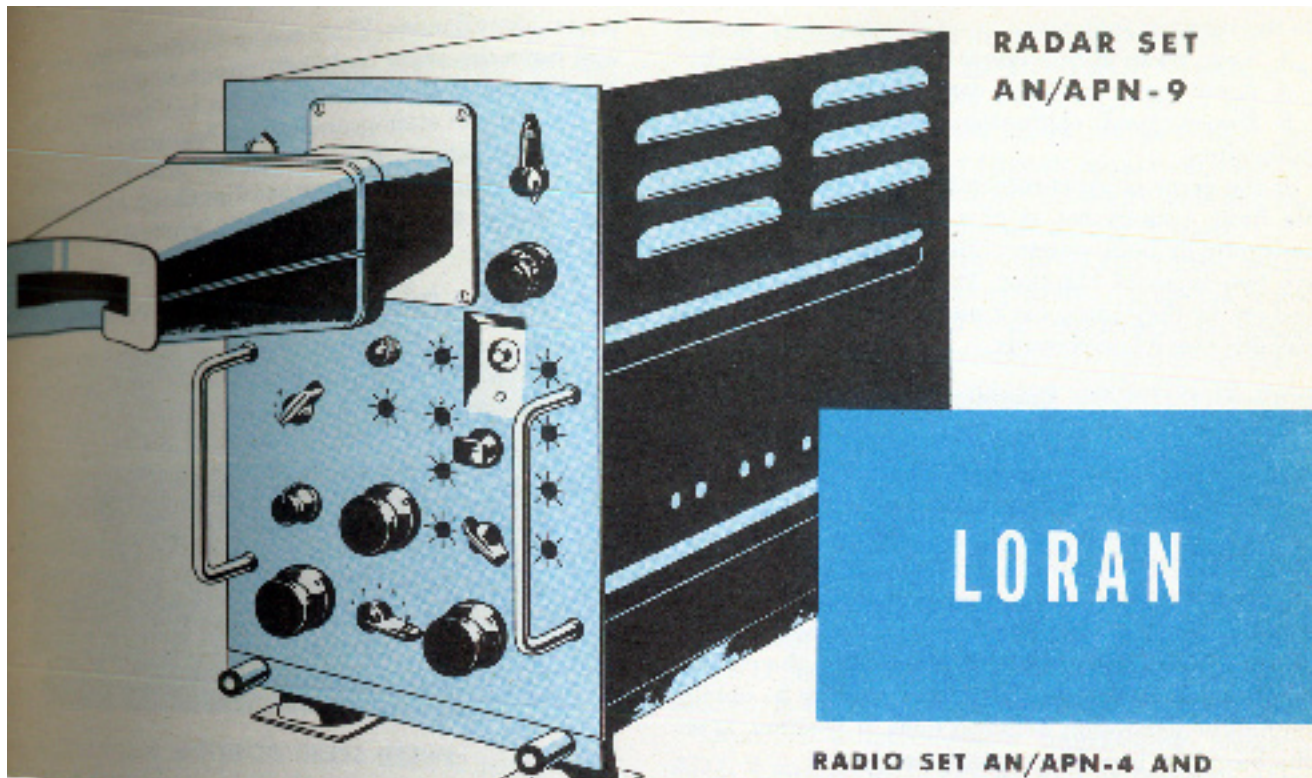
Our quarters were Nissen huts. There were the four officers of three crews assigned to each hut. We had a potbellied stove for heat



Map showing signals from the master and slave stations from which fixes could be plotted

and bathrooms in a separate build-

ing. The mess hall and operations building were quite a distance away. We also had an orderly named Sgt. Bienick who kept the fire burning in the



A Loran receiver, similar to a "Gee" box

stove and cleaned the place. We were too tired after our mission to do much of anything besides fall into our beds.

We spent a lot of time getting lectures from navigators who taught us about navigation in the E.T.O. (European Theatre of Operation). We spend a lot of time learning the British navigation system similar to the U. S. system of Loran (long range aid to navigation). Larry Fick explained the G System as follows: "The British call their system "Gee." With the Gee system, we could take and plot a fix very quickly. It was very accurate when the aircraft was close to the sending stations, but the farther the ship was from the transmitters the less accurate the fixes were. The system was made up of several series of ground radio stations that sent out signals at regular intervals. Each series was made up of three radio transmitters. One transmitter was the master that would trigger a signal from the other transmitters called slaves. The information was displayed as blips on the cathode ray tube in the "Gee" box. We had to adjust the set to stop movement of the blips. To find our po-

sition, we threw a switch that locked in the information. The tube then showed two lines of markers that looked very much like rulers with no numbers. We were able to put values to the markers and then transfer the numbers to special maps. Where the two lines crossed was our location at the time the fix was locked in.

They issued us the rest of our flying gear such as Mae Wests (inflatable life vests), parachutes, steel helmets, goggles, throat mikes, and black, high top civilian shoes. The throat mikes were held to our throat by an elastic band. Each unit had two small microphones that fit against the sides of our throat, one on each side of our "Adams Apple." The radio system in the planes had feedback so we could hear how our own voice sounded. That way we could learn how to speak so that the others could understand us. The mike cord had a switch that we could depress when we wanted to talk. The pilots' mike buttons were fastened to a spoke on the control wheel. This way we all had our hands free to do other things. The black shoes were to be carried each time we were over enemy territory. They were tied together with parachute shroud lines and fastened to the parachute harness with a metal snap in case we had to bail out. Those shoes had two purposes. One was that the flying boots were not suitable for walking. The other was that if we got down safely and undetected, we were less apt to be spotted in black civilian shoes than in brown army issue shoes. They also gave us a large canvas bag, called a parachute bag, to carry the gear out to the plane in. They assigned each of us a locker in the briefing hut to keep our flying gear in. The briefing hut was an extra large Nissen hut where crews met before each mission to get instructions for the mission. It was also the place where everyone came back to at the end of the mission to change clothes and be debriefed.

We were awakened about 2 A.M., got dressed, showered (electric Remington) went to the latrine, and on to a breakfast of powdered eggs, toast, and coffee. Then on to briefing where the target, course, turning points etc. were marked on a huge map with heavy yarn connecting the points enroute. After the general briefing we had a separate briefing by Major Holmes. The navigators were given the times, course turn-

More than 18,200 B-24's were built



ing points, altitude wind direction and speed, target and alternate target information and the location of anti-aircraft batteries enroute and in the target area.

When the briefings were over, we went to the locker room to finish dressing. We put our electric flying suits over our uniforms, then the heavy B-13 jacket, leather helmet and flying boots. We also had the parachute pack, the black shoes, parachute harness, the Mae West and the steel helmet all placed in a large canvas bag to be taken to the plane.

The first plane to take off was an

Nissen Hut



old B-24D painted with colored circles. This was the formation ship piloted by Col Shower or one of his deputies. Ours was called "Pete" the POM inspector. The P.O.M. stood for Prepare for Overseas Mission. The planes took off at 30 second intervals and started to circle over non-directional radio beacons called splashers and bunchers that the British had set up to be used as navigation aids. It usually took about two hours from the time the planes started to take off until the lead plane departed the English Coast.

When the time to depart arrived the lead Group flew over the departure point. Other wings and groups fell into a trail formation called a bomber stream made up of more than 2000 B-24's and B-17's.

Monday, July 24 - Our first combat mission was July 24 on a Monday to a target seven miles west of St. Lo (Montreuil) and about 16 miles from the Normandy coast. It was undercast so we all turned around and went home. We saw some flak and I had an awful time getting my flak suit on and oxygen mask. I had no G-box on this mission.

Tuesday, July 25 - We went over the same target as yesterday carrying 240 fragmentation bombs. There was no undercast so the Cherbourg Peninsula and St. Lo were as visible as a picture. We came on the bomb run at 12,500 feet on a heading of 190 degrees. I saw two B-24's go down and blow up. I saw three parachutes from the first one and one from the second. We really plastered the whole area and the flak was quite accurate.

The following article appeared on July 26 in the Stars and Stripes, the official daily newspaper of the United States Army.

Aerial Armada Blasts A Path for U.S. Advance

Fifteen hundred heavies plus fleets of other planes strike at Nazis in France. More than three thousand American bombers and fighters including the largest contingent of heavies ever dispatched on a single mission battered German frontline positions for two and one half hours yesterday morning in support of the US first army's thrust against the enemy's line at the western end of the Normandy front. In an over-

whelming display of both tactical support and allied air supremacy, the Eight and Ninth Air force armadas dropped thousands of fragmentation bombs and one hundred pound bombs just ahead of advancing Yank ground troops without meeting a single interceptor. The Eight Air Force opened the offensive at 10 a.m. by sending in the first of fifteen hundred fortresses and liberators. Only five of the fifteen hundred bombers and three of an escorting force of five hundred fighters were lost.

Then wave after wave of marauders havoc, and Ninth fighter bombers pounded machine gun nests, pill boxes, gun emplacements, and enemy troop installations to pave the way for the American drive.

All the bombing, which was carried out visually was completed by 12:20 p.m. Although more aircraft took part in the assault, it was understood that a smaller tonnage was dropped yesterday than in last Tuesday's attacks in support of the British advance southeast of Caen. Instead of dropping ground cratering ground explosives, American warplanes yesterday unloosed small and fragmentation bombs. Early yesterday morning escorted Lancasters struck robot launching sites in North France and an installation which the air ministry said seemed to be connected with the enemy's threatened use of long range rockets.

From Italy meanwhile a force of 500 escorted U.S. heavy bombers made the first allied attack on the Herman Goering tank works in Austria near the Bavarian border.

Wednesday, July 26 - Our mission was stood down (cancelled) in the morning, and in the afternoon we got ready to bomb bases of the German air force at Orleans, but it was scrubbed.

Thursday, July 27 - Awakened at 2a.m. Got to briefing at 0300 for the mission to Leipheim, a small town near Augsburg. The mission was scrubbed so we went back to bed at 0600. Had a practice mission in the afternoon at 1300 feet. Cumulonimbus clouds went up to 25,000 ft. The rain fell in cloudbursts. We were alerted again to fly tomorrow.

Friday, July 28- Up at 0200 hours. Stood down again. Young and I

went to Norwich and saw The Student Prince, an Operetta by Sigmund Romburg. We rode into Norwich on our bicycles.

Saturday, July 29 - We were up again at 0340 hours. We were briefed to go to Bremen. We got up to 8000 feet when number two engine went out so we aborted. We spend the rest of the day lying around. Our plane was Valiant Lady.

Ernie Pyle's report that appeared in the Stars and Stripes entitled "Straight from the Front" July 27

Normandy - A few days after D-Day we spoke of the five early phases of the continental invasion that would have to take place. Phase number five was to breakout of the beachhead after we held it secure long enough to build up vast quantities of troops and supplies behind us. And once we'd broken out of the ring of Germans trying to hold us in and completed phase five the war in Western Europe would begin. Well, we're in phase five now. At least we are while I'm writing this. Things are moving swiftly. You realize that several days elapsed between the writing and the publication of this column. By the time you read this we maybe out in the open and pushing into France.

Surely history will give a name to the battle that sent us boiling out of Normandy - some name comparable to St. Mihiel or Meuse Argonne of the last war, but to us here on the spot it was known simply as the break through.

We correspondents could sense that the big drive was coming. There are many different ways that you can tell without actually being told if you are experienced in war. And then one evening Lt. General Omar Bradley commanding all American troops in France came to our camp and briefed us on the coming operation. It would start on the first day we had three hours good flying weather in the forenoon.

We were all glad to hear the news. There isn't a correspondent or a soldier or an officer I ever heard of who hasn't complete and utter faith in General Bradley. If he felt we were ready for the push, it was good enough for us.

The General told us the attack would cover a segment of the Ger-

man line west of St. Lo about five miles wide. In that narrow segment we would have three infantry divisions side by side. Right behind them we would have another infantry division and two armored divisions. Once the hole was broken, the armored divisions would slam through several miles beyond, then turn right toward the sea behind the Germans in that section in the hope of cutting them off and trapping them. The remainder of our line on both sides of the attack would keep pressure on to hold the Germans on in front of them so they couldn't send reinforcements against our big attack.

The attack was to open with a gigantic two hour bombardment by 1800 planes - the biggest I'm sure ever attempted by air in direct support of ground troops. It would start with dive bombers, then great four-motored heavies would come and then mediums, then dive bombers again, and then the ground troops would kick off with the air fighters continuing to work ahead of them.

Excerpt from Stars and Stripes - July 27

Lt. General Lesley J. McNair was killed by an American bomb while observing from the front line the aerial bombardment which preceded the U.S. Drive in Normandy on July 25. An official announcement yesterday reported that his death was due to the action of one of our own high explosive bombs.

Sunday, July 30 - We got up at 11:30 a.m. Had briefing for a practice mission at 11:45 a.m. so I just had time for a little lunch. The other guys didn't get any. We flew at 21,000 feet but cumulonimbus clouds went up to 35,000 feet. We ate supper of roast beef, mash potatoes and beans. This was a little better than our average mess.

Monday, July 31 - We did not fly today, but I got restricted to the base for a week for being two minutes late at the briefing yesterday. I got paid \$92 and took my clothes to the cleaners.

Tuesday, Aug 1.- Big mission today. Got up at 7:30 a.m. and had briefing at 8:30 a.m. The target was Doullens, which is Southwest of Lille.

The target was a flying bomb emplacement, so we had zero hour postponed twice, rather it was advanced an hour each time. Finally we took off at 12:38 . We climbed to 20,000 feet and had a solid undercast. We saw thousands of balloons over the London area. and then headed for Selsey Bill and the target. Then we were just about over the coast of France, and it was still undercast so we turned around and came home. We circled splasher 5 and then went out to sea to drop our bombs which were delayed action twelve 500 pounders. I homed in over the field by G-box and broke out of the over cast at 600 feet. We got no credit for the mission.

Wednesday, Aug 2 - Alerted for 1400. Mission to the same place we were at yesterday. We took off at 1630 and departed Splasher 5 at 21,000 feet. Ran over the target and dropped our bombs. The flak was pretty accurate . (Flak was an abbreviation of a number of German words describing their anti-aircraft artillery, “FliegerAbwehrKanonen”. In English it meant Flier Defense Cannon.) We took evasive action and came out over the coast at Dunkerque. Let down over Splasher 1, then came back over the field at 200 feet. The soup was pretty thick. I got to bed by about 12:00 a.m.

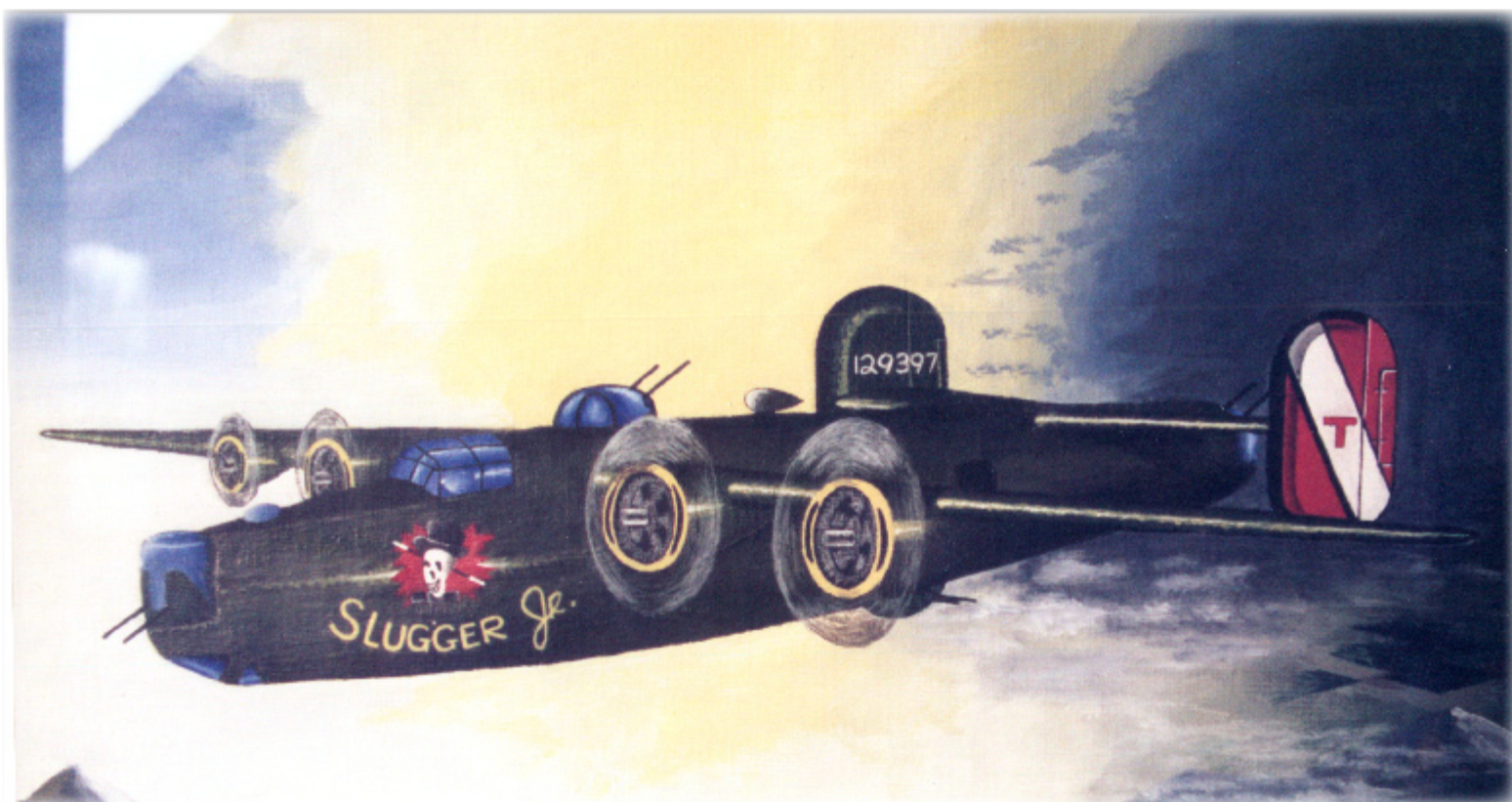
Thursday, Aug 3 - Briefing again at 1400 hours. Took off at 1643 for oil dumps at Lille, France. We got over the target at about 1930 the first time. Then made a 360 turn because a cloud was over the city. We didn't drop our bombs but went to Belgium on the way home. Went directly over Ghent and could see Antwerp, Rotterdam and the Hague in Holland before we left the coast. We landed at 2010 with only two flak holes. The hydraulic fluid in the tail turret was dripping again. It's time to go to bed. Now it's 11:30 p.m.

Friday, Aug 4 - Got up at 0600 and had briefing at 7:15. We had 2700 gallons of fuel and were on the way Rostock to hit a Heinkel 111 plant, German airplanes. The route went along Heligoland, Flensburg, and then to Rostock. Went along at 23,000 feet. First squadron missed the

target completely, but we had an excellent pattern and I saw the bombs blow the target to bits. The flak missed us completely but the squadron behind us was hit hard. We passed next to Kiel, which was attacked by B-17s. We were on oxygen for five hours and all of us were worn out. The flak suit got mighty heavy. This was mission number five. Tomorrow is the Air Medal.

Saturday, Aug 5 - Up at 0600 hrs. Briefing at 7:15 to Brunswick. The route went in around Heligoland, Wesermunde down between the Elbe and the Wesser, then opposite Hamburg to the target. Flak was pretty rough over the target but again we only got one hole. We came over the ZeiderZee on the way out. We flew next to Amsterdam. The lowlands of Holland are laid out in perfect rectangles. Even at 20,000 feet the flowers in the field showed up as a beautiful patchwork of colors. We took off at 10:43 and landed at 15:40. Bombs hit the target on the

Slugger Jr. was the airplane that we flew on the following dates and to the following places: 7/30/44 local practice mission; 8/3 Lille; 8/4 Rostock; 8/6 Hamburg; 8/24 Hanover; 8/27 started for Berlin and diverted to Denmark; 9/8 Magdeburg/Stendal; 9/23 Clastres Fr ferried gasoline; 9/24 and 9/25 Clastres Fr ferried gasoline; 11/8 local instrument practice



head, which was a Messerschmidt 109 plane. Bernie Lebar went down with Love today. Also another guy went down. We lost Collins two days ago and Schumacher dropped our crew for a lead crew so I can drop bombs too.

Sunday, Aug 6 - Got up at 11 a.m. One would never have known it was Sunday. Briefed on some oil refineries at Hamburg. Took off at 7:58 and got to the target at 11:59. What an awful lot of flak. The most flak I ever saw or ever want to see. I was watching the bombs go away and couldn't see where they were landing so I stuck my head out the side window. Thirty seconds later a piece of flak splattered the glass below the bombsight into a million pieces. Some of which flew up to the pilot's flight deck. My desk was covered with glass from a hole three inches long and one inch wide. I only found a piece of flak about one inch by one inch. The flak is a jagged piece of cheap steel. Two more airplanes went down. One had a wing shot off while the other seemed to have his engines stop. The flak was so thick that the sky was black with puffs. Fear doesn't bother me as we go through it because there is nothing I can do. Only God looks after us. Alerted again for tomorrow. One co-pilot fell out of the bomb bay into the North Sea on the way home. this was mission number seven.

Monday, Aug 7 - We did not fly today for some strange reason.

Tuesday, Aug 8 - This is 8-8-8 for me. We got up at 0600, briefing at 0700 for an airport of the German Air force at Clastres, France, 75 miles northeast of Paris. Received some very accurate flak over the Dutch Coast, but our squadron did not get hit over the target. I heard shells explode and the flak sprayed the upper part of the plane. I had a G-box so I stood all the way and I was really tired. We really hit the target and there were no fighters.

Wednesday, Aug 9 - We were awakened at 0400 for a briefing at 0500. This morning we had 2700 gallons of gas and the target was a ball-bearing-

ing factory at Stuttgart. The formation ran into a big front over Holland so we skirted it and ended up over Saarbrücken. No signal was given so by the time we saw the lead ship drop we were over the railroad yards. We carried ten 500 pound incendiary cluster bombs which never opened because we were at 17,000 feet instead of 23,000. Everyone dropped bombs at a different time, many dropped bombs through the bomb bay doors. I saw one plane from which eight men bailed out while another one went down in flames. Everyone is so tired that we can hardly move. I think this is an awful life.

Thursday, Aug 10 - The wing was stood down (not scheduled to fly) today and all we had today was a lecture on the dingy. I had G-box practice from 1400- 1500. Young, Mac, Bieber, and I went to Norwich, but Young and I went home around 9 p.m. since we were too tired to move.

Friday, Aug 11 - Got up at 0600, briefing at 0700 for Strasburg. P.F.F. target was Saarbrücken (That meant the target wasn't visible). The weather was fine and pilotage was good all the way to the target and back. We flew in Valiant Lady so I had a seat and a G-box. The target was an over pass at the end of the marshalling yards which we hit quite thoroughly. We came home over our briefed course so everything was fine. We had taken off at 10:36 and landed at 1800. The flak was light and inaccurate.

Saturday, Aug 12 - They woke us up at 2 a.m. after getting to bed at 11:30 p.m. Briefing was at 3 for an airport near Chalons, France, which is close to Rheims. We hit the target and had very little flak. We took off at 5:12 and landed at 14:20. All of the mission was over France, Belgium and Holland. There were no fighters so it was the easiest milk-run of the series. This was number eleven and we are alerted again for tomorrow for number twelve. We were 25 miles from Paris today but couldn't see any part of the city.

Sunday, Aug 13 - Got up at 0600 for briefing to bomb the retreating

Germans on the Seine near Rouen, France. The flak wasn't much but it was accurate. I saw seven parachutes come by my window near the I.P. (initial point) but I couldn't see the airplane. We couldn't see the plane. We lost a plane from the 791st which got flak in the bomb bay and blew up completely. The chutes I saw were from another plane. We got back to base by 1400 so it wasn't too bad. I went on watch officer duty at 5 p.m. and spent an awful night and next morning waking up people who didn't live where they were supposed to.

Monday, Aug 14- Got off duty at 8:30 so Young and I went to town to get the 10:15 train to London. While going down the hill toward the railroad station, I was half asleep and ran into a parked car. I took a terrific spill, but my mussette bag saved me, and all I got was a wrecked bike and some black and blue marks. I didn't get a seat on the train, so I sat on my mussette bag all the way to London in the aisle. When I got off the train, I saw a navigator named Christian who apparently had been there before so I tagged along with him. We got a room in the Regent Palace Hotel in Picaddily Circus. It's quite a nice place and centrally located. After dinner we went to the Savoy Theater and saw *The Last of Mrs. Chaney*, a horrible English play. The British people laughed while I was bored stiff. After that we walked to the parliament buildings and Westminster Abbey on the road along the Thames. I was so tired after that that I went home to bed and so did Chris.

Tuesday, Aug 15 - I got up about 1000. I had breakfast and went to Rathbone St to the Remington shop with my razor. It needs a new condenser and he didn't have any. We went to the Officer's PX and then back to the hotel. Next we took a number 13 bus to London Bridge, which goes by St. Paul's Cathedral. We came back by walking over the Tower Bridge and then went through London's bloody old tower. Next we went to St. Paul's Cathedral and then back to the hotel. From there I ate supper and went to see Fantasia. After that I sat in the hotel

lounge after dodging the Piccadilly commandos (prostitutes in Piccadilly Circus who tried to lure us into their apartments for sex) and went to bed.

Wednesday, Aug 16- At about 0830 I woke up and a little after that we heard the bomb come buzzing but I couldn't see it. Finally it blew up. Went to the PX again and bought a pair of shoes. Went back to the hotel, checked out and headed for the railroad station. This time I got a seat and I sat all the way back to Norwich. Arrived in Norwich at 1700 hours and found my bicycle which was all fixed up. It cost one pound for the repairs.

Thursday, Aug 17 - The group was stood down for the day so we didn't do a thing except go to PT.

Friday, Aug 18 - Woke up at 0835 for briefing at 9 a.m. Twenty-five hundred gallons of fuel for an eight hour mission to Metz in France. We really hit the motor works at the North end of town. There was no flak and no fighters so it was quite a milk run except for the long time on oxygen. Saw the bombs burst over the target in little red flashes. We had started on the mission at 1058 and got back at 1900 hours. We are alerted again for tomorrow.

Saturday, Aug 19 - Stood down for today so we had lectures and PT in the morning. In the afternoon, Bieber and I went to Wroxham and rented a sailboat and then went sailing on the Broads (a little lake). The wind died down so we had to paddle back in the rain. The 100th mission celebration started tonight. They had General Hodges and General Peck here. Almost everybody got drunk as lords. We had a lot of fireworks and a free for all with everyone shooting their pistols. Bieber got a terrifically swollen jaw. Young and I came home early so we missed all the drunks.

Sunday, Aug 20 - Young and I went to Norwich and met quite a few of

the old boys. I saw Butler, Deitzgen, and Boomhower at the Red Cross Club. We went to see a movie entitled The Tower of London.

Monday, Aug 21- Stood down again but Bieber went to the hospital with his swollen jaw.

Tuesday, Aug 22 - Bonfanti came in the evening and we went to Norwich and saw the show Of Mice and Men.

Wednesday, Aug 23 - Stood down again. Had a close order drill and PT at 1400 hours.

John Boesen and I went to Wroxham and paddled up the river to the American Red Cross. John and I went in for awhile, but it's pretty chilly although it is quite a nice place.

Thursday, Aug 24- Woke up at 3:30 a.m. with briefing at 4:30 a.m. The target was a synthetic oil plant at Hanover. We took off at 0724 and landed at 1355. There was pretty much flak around the target but we didn't get hit. Number 4 engine was squirting oil so it had to be feathered four minutes after we passed over the target. There were no enemy fighters and we came home okay.

Friday, Aug 25 - We woke up at 0430 with briefing at 0530 for the target with an airplane factory at Lubeck, Germany. We took off at 0730 and landed at 1503. We were in the lead squadron and missed the flak over the target because they didn't have our altitude. Our squadron missed the target completely but the third squadron really hit it. I watched an airfield get blown up before we got to Lubeck which was a horrible but very fascinating sight. At first there were only small puffs of smoke that could be seen after the bombs were dropped, but they kept on exploding for ten minutes or more after the planes left. There were many pinpoints of flame as the bombs exploded. It looked like a bunch of twinkling stars as the bombs exploded. A huge column of smoke came up to

15,000 feet which was quite a sight. It was the 15th mission for me and the 17th mission for Young. John Boesen and all the crew except three gunners bailed out. The gunners rode the pilotless airplane down and weren't killed.

Saturday, Aug 26- Briefing at 0530 again to an oil dump 30 miles southwest of Munster. The mission was a milk run except times were advanced by two hours, which made us get back at two instead of twelve. We missed the target by 500 yards since the bombs fell to the right of the M.P.I. There was no flak at 20,000 feet. Bill Bieber came to see me tonight and he has his jaws wired tight shut. He was funnier than ever and I nearly died laughing at him. He'll be in the hospital for six weeks with his mouth wired shut. Went to Norwich with McTyre, Reab and Pappas. I came home about 10:30 by myself.

Sunday, Aug 27 - It was a beautiful morning. We had briefing at 7:30, which was a reasonable time. They tell us we will have 2300 gallons of gas and then they'll top off the tanks at 2700. The mission is to Berlin. Some assembly plant for jet propelled planes about 5 miles north of Berlin. Took off at 10:54 and ran into a front over the Danish Peninsula. Towering cumulus clouds were about and above us while solid cirrus clouds were above. Planes came whizzing by us from Germany about 50 miles out. More planes than one could ever count. The sky was filled with clouds of 17's and 24's. Some were coming and others going. Finally we also turned around at Heligoland. Then 15 minutes later we turned 180 degrees and headed for Germany again. We got to the coast and turned around again and came home. I don't know whether we received credit for this mission or not; however, it was number 17 for us.

Monday, Aug 28 - We were stood down and Boesen and I took a bike ride into the country and bought some plums. Boesen and his crew are going on flak leave starting tomorrow. We went together to the show which was titled Double Indemnity. I wish I were going with them on

leave.

Tuesday, Aug 29 - Drill and PT as usual. We got word that we can go on a two day pass tomorrow. I plan to go to Cambridge.

Wednesday, Aug 30 - Got up at 9:15 and rode the bikes to town. I ran into an old lady and knocked her down. So since she didn't say much, I gave her a pound. Caught the 10:25 train and got to Cambridge at 1300. Went to the American Red Cross and then got a boat and spent two hours on the Cam. Saw Gone With the Wind during the evening.

Thursday, Aug 31 - I visited various colleges, St. John's, Trinity, King's College and Emmanuel. The King's College Chapel is the most beautiful I have ever seen. I couldn't buy any postcards of any sort so all I got were some handkerchiefs for Grace and Irene. I went to the circus during the evening and it was quite corny.

Friday, Sept. 1 - Came home on the 10 a.m. train. They had us scheduled for link, GEE, code ETC but Mac and Young missed it. Well, we're also supposed to fly tonight, but if they don't come, maybe we won't. I got paid \$84.

Saturday, Sept. 2- Stood down but had a parade in the afternoon. I played cards with Young and Schumacher.

Sunday, Sept. 3 - We had more rain and were stood down again. It was beautiful about noontime so I went to Great Yarmouth and saw a swimming meet. I got caught in the rain on the way home and got soaked through and through.

Monday, Sept. 4 - Stood down again because it rained all day off and on. It is soon time we fly again.

Tuesday, Sept. 5- Nothing but stood down.

Wednesday, Sept. 6 - Stood down. Much rain. Talked with Boesen till 2 a.m.

Thursday, Sept. 7- Stood down. More rain.

Friday, Sept. 8 - Awoke at 0400 with briefing at 0500. We took six 1000lb general purpose bombs to Karlsruhe to the marshalling yard. Took off at 0738 and landed at 1610. After we left England, we ran into building cumulus all over the channel. Some thunder heads went up to 25,000 feet and above. After going by Paris and turning on 90 degrees, we started running into the front. We started climbing and went to 28,000 feet, the highest I have ever been. Temperature was -42 degrees, which was the coldest I've ever seen. I had my electric suit on high, and it kept me nice and warm. We dog legged (made turns) around the front and finally got to the target. The flak was heavy and accurate. I was scared when a hunk of flak ripped a 10 inch gash in the fuselage alongside of me. We hit the yards and really raised hell. We climbed again to 27,500 feet to come back over the front. On top of the front, everything looked like the Greenland Ice cap. It was quite clear when we came right over Rouen we could see the great cathedral and the whole city as clear as day.

Saturday, Sept. 9 - Up at 3:45 with a briefing for Mainz, Germany. Where we were to hit the railroad yards. We saw a lot of flak over the target, which was covered by a cloud. We turned south of the target and started doing a 360 turn but leveled out. We bombed the railroad yards at Worms, about 30 miles south of Mainz on the Rhine. Then the lead navigator took us over Mainz and we caught some more flak a little further west. This was mission number 19.

Sunday, Sept. 10 - Up at the usual 3:45 and briefing at 4:45 for a factory at Ulm. P.F.F target was the railroad yards at Ulm. Everything went nicely until we got south of Strasburg when the low left squadron practically went over the town. We caught a good bit of flak, which burst mighty close. We got a big piece in the tail and one in the leading edge of the wing. We couldn't see the target so we bombed it PFF with bombs falling to the left of the target. We went back over Luxembourg. We saw tremendous columns of smoke up to 20,000 feet from

Saarbrücken. Boesen and I and his co-pilot went to Norwich but all the shows were filled up. Got to bed at 10 p.m.

Newspaper article

Monday, Sept 11 - Up again for number 21. The target was Magdeburg oil refinery. We caught a lot of flak of Koblenz near the southern part of the Ruhr Valley. Fighter support was very good. I saw a P-51 strafe a train. Two of our ships had to turn back. One never came back,. It may have landed in France. We made a run over Magdeburg, but it was snow white. There was moderate flak which didn't hit us. We kept on going and bombed a town named Stendal about forty miles northeast. We came back near Hanover from which a great tower of smoke arose. with flames licking at its base. Number 21 for me, 23 for Young. Alerted for tomorrow.

Excerpt from Larry Fick's book

Hauling Gasoline to Patton's Third Army

On September 12, the 96th Combat wing (458th, 466th, and 467th Bomb Groups) were shifted from hauling fuel for the rapidly advancing 3rd Army. Patton's armored forces were moving so fast that ground transportation could not keep them supplied. The three groups in the 20th wing hauled food and medical supplies to a field near Paris from August 28 through September 9. On September 17th, the 14th and 20th Wings (7 groups of B-24s) were assigned to drop supplies to the Allied advance forces at Arnheim, Eindhoven, and Nijmegen. It was a dangerous, low level mission that involved 252 aircraft. Seven ships were lost on the mission and 70 that returned had suffered heavy battle damage. The returning planes had 30 wounded on board. The B-24s had a much greater capacity to haul all types of freight than the B-17s so we drew the cargo hauls of all types. The 1st and 3rd Divisions (B-17s) stayed with the bombing missions.

The first attempt at hauling gasoline involved putting a lot of 5 gallon cans in the waist and using two sections of the wing tanks. With this arrangement the crews could only haul about 1,000 gallons in each plane. It was obvious that changes had to be made if the operation was

going to be effective, so a lot of people went to work on the project and came up with some improvements. It was to use two bombay tanks (450 gallons each) in the front bomb bays. We had used these tanks on our trip over from the states so they had a good supply. They hung P-51 drop tanks (75 gallons each) from the bomb shackles in the rear bomb bays, and tied down two P-38 drop tanks in the waist. Once the method of converting the bombers into gasoline tankers had been determined, all of the tanks had to be located and hauled to the bases. After the tanks had been delivered, it was up to the ground crews to install them in the planes. Then, all that remained was to fill the individual tanks with 80 octane gasoline and wait for good weather. Between converting bombers into tankers and cloudy weather, it took five days to get the operation really rolling. We put six planes up on September 18.

On September 12, we took our first load of gasoline to Clastres France (68 miles NNE of Paris). On our way to the field we flew over the Thames estuary, east of London. We had to stay high enough to clear the barrage balloons that protected the docks in the estuary from low flying German planes and at the same time stay out of the way of the groups of tow planes and gliders that were heading across our path. The boxy gliders were being towed by C-47 cargo planes. It was a very interesting sight, even if it was a little crowded. Those tow planes and gliders carried the 101st airborne troops that were headed for some bridges in the Netherlands. We were glad that we were not with them heading for an uncertain landing in rough terrain in area that was occupied by enemy troops.

We didn't know it at the time but the transport planes and gliders that we saw were a part of a complex operation that started on September 17, with the code name of "Market Garden." On the first day of operation the 8th Air Force dispatched 200 P-47 fighters to fly at 2000 to 2500 feet elevation along the course that the tow planes and gliders were going to follow. As soon as the German gunners opened up on the formations of P-47s, some of them would drop down and dive bomb and strafe at the gun emplacements. The neutralization operation was so successful that only 12 troop carriers were shot down by guns that the

fighters could not find. Without the fighter sweep, the Germans would have had a field day shooting down the slow, low flying towplanes and their gliders. The fighters paid a heavy price with some squadrons being nearly wiped out. One of the P-47 pilots on that mission spoke to our 8th Air Force organization in Beaverton in 1997 describing the mission. He felt that if they had been allowed to fly a little higher, they could have accomplished the mission but suffered fewer losses.

On September 21, the Luftwaffe decimated the troop carriers going to the Arnheim-Netherlands area. "Market Garden" was a very costly operation for the Allies. The British airborne units lost 6,600 men out of the 9000 engaged and the Americans lost 3,500 men. The Allied gain was only a 65 mile corridor into Holland.

The field at Clastres had been a fighter base used by the Luftwaffe (German Air Force). It didn't have many taxiways that would hold up a heavily loaded bomber so we had to park our planes on the base with one pass. If the German fighters that attacked the troop transports on September 21, had found us we would have been defenseless. We only carried one extra person to man the guns and I don't think they ever bothered to put the barrels in the guns anyway. We never saw any anti-aircraft batteries around the field either. [End of Excerpt]

Glenn Young our pilot writes: We crossed the English Channel at 20 feet above the water. Skimming the bluffs of Belgium in order to stay under the clouds. Across France at treetop level. Down the main street of Lille, France below the tops of the buildings and landing at Clastres was something of a nightmare. I know you were along because you were so thrilled that the white caps were breaking across the nose of the plane. There was quite a storm going on in the channel and we had to fly under it."

We stayed overnight twice in Clastres and I did get to go to town with Bosko. I did not get any souvenirs, but I do remember how amazed I was at seeing a long line of men outside what I first thought was a movie house. I was half right except that it was a whore house. We did not join that line.

Tuesday, Sept. 12 - We took gasoline for Clastres.

Wednesday, Sept. 13 - Stood down. I am going on a seven day leave. I was on watch officer duty.

Thursday, Sept. 14 - Left at noon on a liberty run for Edinburgh, Scotland.

Friday, Sept. 15 - Arrived at 6 a.m. at Waverly Street Station. I slept on the floor of the train all night.

Saturday, Sept. 16 - Went dancing at the Palais.

Sunday, Sept. 17 - rode about the city on the trams.

Monday, Sept. 18 - Went to Balerno with Anne and Olivia. We picked heather.

Tuesday, Sept. 19 - Went to Glasgow. Went to Loch Lomond. We rowed about the Loch for three hours. We came home around 10 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 20 - Went shopping and bought some handkerchiefs, ties, and scarves.

Thursday, Sept. 21 - Left town on the 10:15 a.m. train and got to Norwich at 11:05 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 22 - Got out of trucking mission.

Saturday, Sept. 23 - Flew to Clastres and returned.

Sunday, Sept. 24 - Flew to Clastres. Had champagne with Reab and Bosko in St. Quentin. We stayed there overnight.

Monday, Sept. 25 - Flew another mission to Clastres and stayed there overnight.

Tuesday, Sept. 26 - We came home and stayed home.

Wednesday, Sept. 27 - Practiced in the mobile trainer all day.

Thursday, Sept. 28 - Flew to Clastres.

Friday, Sept. 29 - Flew to Clastres

Saturday, Sept. 30 - Just got paid and stood down.

Sunday, Oct 1 -I wrote letters. Boesen bought a bottle of wine. We had cheese sandwiches nuts and candy with Young and McTyre.

Monday, Oct. 2 - Stood down. Got out of a practice mission and went to the hippodrome with Young.

Tuesday, Oct. 3 - We flew a practice mission.

Wednesday, Oct. 4 - Up at 3:30 for a briefing at 4:30 near Giessen, Germany. Had just drawn up maps when they reported the mission was scrubbed so we all went back to bed until 11:30 a.m. Bill Bieber came back from the hospital for good.

Thursday, Oct. 5 - Briefing at 4:45 for an airport at Paderborn, Germany. Took 378 off but landed again because the pilot's seat broke. Took off in 171 and just got to 16000 feet as the formation departed splasher 5. Farrell rode in the nose turret. After crossing the ZeiterZee number three engine started throwing oil by the gallon so we had to feather it and drop out of the formation. We hobbled along by ourselves. Since we didn't see any flak over the target we went over by ourselves about

5 minutes after the squadron dropped their bombs. We were shooting flares for fighters and got them. We finally made it back ok and landed last. Twenty minutes after the rest who had given us up for lost. That really was more nerve racking than most long missions I've been on.

Friday, Oct. 6 - We were not alerted for today, but they got me up a half hour before briefing to fly with Graham. So I went to 5 a.m. briefing for a target at Wenzendorf. The only sensible target any division had for the day. The target was an airfield, but the one squadron dropped early accidentally so we went on and dropped one and one half miles from the secondary which was an airport at Stade. The incendiaries had a merry time trying to burn up the field. We were only in Germany one hour or less and had no flak. This was the easiest one to Germany I ever had even though I had to sweat out old 78.

Newspaper clipping from Stars and Stripes - Oct. 7 - 1250 United States Heavies Blast Reich Factories and Airfields

Industrial objectives and airdromes over a wide area in the Reich were plastered yesterday by more than 1250 fortresses and liberators of the eighth air force. Almost 1000 Thunderbolt and mustang fighters escorted the heavies. which reported good to excellent bombing results in favorable weather. The 17s and 24s blasted for the first time the Tee-gel Tank Plant, the Spandau, ordinance and tank depots and an aircraft engine plant in the Berlin Area. The Klockener, Aero Engine Plant, and Glinde Ordinance Depot in the vicinity of Hamburg also were pounded for the first time by the Eighth Heavies.

In addition to airdromes at Stuttgart, New Brandenburg and Wenzendorf. Other targets included the Rhenania and the Ebano oil refineries at Harburg. Early reports said 19 bombers and 10 fighters were lost.

Eighth fighters shot down 17 enemy craft while heavies' gunners bagged 3. A thunderbolt pilot shot down an ME 262 jet plane over Hamburg.

Saturday, Oct. 7 - Again I got up at 4:30 for a briefing to the Krupp Armament works at Magdeburg. Again, we fly 378 and go in at the Zeit-

erzee. Again we caught flak at Osnabruck before I knew what was going on. Someone said, "Flak," and I heard the familiar sound which I had heard over Hamburg of flak breaking glass. I had my parka over the bombsight as well as my brief case so it stopped all the flying glass. The flak made a hole at exactly the same spot as the one on the Hamburg mission and broke into the bombsight. The size of the piece is about two inches long and it looks quite wicked. We went over the target and hit it for a change. We caught no fighters so once more we were lucky. This was number 24 which gives me three oak leaf clusters for my air medal.

news article Reich Hit by 5000 Aircraft

Germany underwent its greatest aerial assault of the war Saturday when more than 5000 allied bombers, mostly fortresses and liberators of the United States Air Air Forces, and fighters struck from Britain, France and Italy at key industrial and communication points from east to west and north to south.

The combined strength of more than 1400 British bombers and upwards of 800 Italy based B-17s and B-24s comprised the largest U.S. bomber force ever dispatched on a single operation. This was the third successive day of large scale operations by the Eighth Air Force and the biggest attacking force since June 20 when over 1500 Eighth heavies went out.

The Eight losses were 51 bombers and 15 fighters against the destruction of 49 enemy aircraft in the air and one on the ground including four jet propelled Nazi fighters. Two ME262s were shot down by 1/Lt Urban L. Drew P-51 pilot from Detroit, who became the first Eight fighter command pilot to score a double kill over the Nazis new type of interceptor in one day.

Escorted by more than 900 thunderbolts, mustangs and lightnings of the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces, the Eighth heavies ranged over central, eastern, and Northeastern Germany hammering synthetic oil plants at Politz, near the Baltic Sea, Ruhland, Magdeburg, Bohlen, Merseburg, and Lutzkendorf. The latter three are in the Leibzig area and Ruhland is northeast of Dresden.

Other targets included a Kruppe Tank Works at Magdeburg; tank plants, aero engine plants and locomotive works at Kassel; a chemical and explosive works at Zellerfeld south of Brunswick; a FockeWulf 190 repair depot ,airdrome and a motor transport plant at Zwickau, south of Leipzig, and an airfield at Nordausen.

Sunday, Oct. 8 - Alerted for a mission to Magdeburg again to bomb some target which wasn't bombed the day before. We had the airplane warmed up and ready to go and then the mission was scrubbed at about 11 a.m. Beiber, Pappas, and I went to Great Yarmouth and then went to a show at Black Friar's Hall.

Monday, Oct. 9 - Briefing at 7:45 a.m. at railroad yards at Giessen. We got over there and had 10/10 undercast (which means it was really cloudy). Somebody changed course on us over the North Sea so i never knew where we were going. We bombed PFF at Koblenz so I don't know what we hit. The flak was thick but we didn't catch any. That was mission number 25.

See news article in Appendix A.

Tuesday, Oct. 10 - We were not alerted.

Wednesday, Oct. 11 - Got a pass and went to London and bought a blouse which I left there to be cut down to an Eisenhower battle jacket. Stayed at the Princess Garden American Red Cross Hotel.

Thursday, Oct. 12 - Did more shopping in the PX. Went to the Coliseum and saw the Merry Widow. I had a room in the Jules Club.

Friday, Oct. 13 - I came home on the 1 p.m. train.

Saturday, Oct 14 - Stood down.

Sunday, Oct 15 - Not alerted but were awakened to fly a practice mis-

sion.

Monday, Oct. 16 - I stayed in bed until 12 noon. Picked a peck of chestnuts which I intend to store for the winter.

Tuesday, Oct 17 - Woke up at 1:30 a.m. to be the assistant briefing officer. When I got to operations I found out we were also supposed to fly on the mission so Major Holmes told me to go back to bed. The mission was to the largest chemical plant in Europe at Kleverkusen four miles north of Cologne. The briefing was at 4 a.m. so I couldn't get back to sleep. Assembly was at 15,000 feet and after many 360 degree turns so some lost pilot could find our formation we finally departed six hours late. There was 10/10 undercast so we dropped PFF (radar equipment identified the target through the clouds) on the marshalling yards at Cologne. We didn't get much flak. The nose turret swung around so we couldn't get into it. I tried to salvo the bombs but the handle wouldn't work so I was 30 seconds late. Then only six went out so Young salvaged. Cassidy said the racks were clear but five minutes later I saw a light on yet which means there was a bomb hanging on. After Cassidy checked again he saw an Incendiary in the rear corner so out it went by itself. Got home by 1 p.m.

news article Oct 17. RHINE CITY REELS UNDER 10,000 TONS OF BOMBS IN A WEEK For Cologne, focal point of road, rail, and river traffic, used to defend the threatened Rhineland, it was the third big raid in four days. Yesterday's attack brought to more than 10,000 tons of bombs of the total dropped on the city in a week.

Wednesday, Oct. 18 - Stood down

Thursday, Oct 19 - Stood down

Friday, Oct 20 - Stood down. More rain

Saturday, Oct 21 - Wing mission (practice) Young flew as instructor pi-

lot.

Sgt. Laroy Moyer - drafted 1942 served in Africa (Libya, Egypt)
376th Bomb Group 512th Squadron
Armorer and Power Turret Mechanic
Assigned to 9th Air Force and 15th Air Force
Took 42 days to get to Africa on Mariposa
Took 9 days to come home to Boston on WestPoint
Discharged September 1945



My brother-in-law LaRoy Moyer was an armorer in North Africa and Italy and worked on the Strawberry Bitch, which Col Shower flew from the Boneyard in Tucson, AZ to the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio where it is today.



Sunday, Oct 22 - Flew an ideal mission to Hamm, Germany. Got up to at 7:30, briefed at 8:30, took off at 11:26. Entire trip was PFF. Saw little flak, came home. I dropped the bombs with the salvo handle because only one light went out. Oh well, I guess we'll see the abortion board

again.

HEAVIES POUND FIVE REICH CITIES. After two days of inactivity because of bad weather, more than 1100 Eight Air force Fortresses and Liberators yesterday hammered industrial and communication targets in the Hamm, Munster, Hanover, and Brunswick areas of Germany. The B-17's and B-24's bombed through solid overcast by means of instruments. There was no enemy fighter opposition.

Monday, Oct 23 - stood down

Matt Wolfe and I took a tour of The Dragon and His Tail B-24 at Lancaster Airport when the Collins Foundation brought in their B-17 and B-24.





We visited Col Shower and his wife Charlotte at the Air Force Retirement Village in Riverside, CA.

son Jonathan, Col. Albert Shower, Charlotte Shower, Me

Tuesday, Oct 24 - I was watch officer for the day.

Wednesday, Oct 25 - Went to London and stayed at the Jules Club

Thursday, Oct 26 - Toured different places in London.

Friday, Oct 27 - Returned to base.

Saturday, Oct 28- Not alerted

Sunday, Oct 29 - Stood down

Monday, Oct 30 - Up at 6:30. Briefing at 7 a.m. Target at Harburg, seven miles south of Hamburg. We ran into a front north of Osnabruck and nearly got hit by other planes. It was the worst mission that we have ever been on. The formation broke up and we flew instruments in complete soup. We climbed to 25,000 feet and headed north and dropped our bombs near Bremen. There was lots of flak but we didn't get any hits. We could have easily been shot down by fighters but we weren't. Pilots got vertigo, but we came out of it O.K. Then we climbed to 27,000 feet but couldn't get over the top of the front so we kept on going up and went north to the North Sea. Bernie Farrell was in the nose turret, and I opened the doors and told him, "It's every man for himself." I put my chest pack parachute on and had one hand on the lever to drop the doors to the nose wheel and I was ready to make a speedy exit. Any loud noise or the bail out bell would have sent me into the German wild blue. From there I took a heading home and arrived three minutes early



S/Sgt. Clarence Krammes
491st Bomb Group
853rd Squadron
Stationed at North Pickingham

Survived a B-24 crash landing on
5th mission on Sept. 18, 1944

shown with his wife Rose

by my E.T.A. All the planes in the division were flying in the soup all around so one never knew when one would collide with us. This was the most nerve racking mission we've ever been on.

The news article stated that more than 800 Fortresses and Liberators escorted by over 950 Mustangs and Thunderbolts - largest bomber escort force ever dispatched by the Eight Air force - hammered oil, rail, and industrial targets in the Reich yesterday.

The U.S. heavies pounded industrial and communications targets at Hamm, and Munster for the third time in six days and again struck at oil refineries and processing plants in the Hamburg= Harburg areas , dropping 2000 tons of bombs. Two bombers and six fighters were lost.

Tuesday , Oct. 31 - Stood down

Wednesday, Nov 1 - Stood down

Thursday, Nov 2 - Combat mission to Bielefeld. Briefing at 6:30 for railroad yards. Target was visual but no flak at the target. Our bombs hit about 100% on the M.P.I (main point of impact). On the way home we caught flak at Osnabruck and saw a few fighters which didn't attack us. The German Air force was up in force judging from VHF calls and the accompanying news clipping shows just how lucky we were not to get hit since the wing behind us did.

Luftwaffe Up, Loses 130 Planes

As many as 400 Jerries were encountered yesterday by more than 900 Thunderbolts and Mustangs which escorted over 1100 Fortresses and liberators in their attack on synthetic oil plants in the Ruhr and at Merseburg in central Germany, as well as rail facilities at Bielefeld and Rheine and other targets in Western Germany.

Friday, Nov 3 - Up at 5 a.m. for briefing at 6:30 a.m. Mission was to Misburg again close to Hanover. We were to have seven groups of fighters so they could tangle with the Luftwaffe if they came up again. However, the front over Ireland, which the weatherman said wouldn't come until afternoon, arrived early so the mission was scrubbed.

Saturday, Nov 4 - I woke at 5:45. Briefing at 6:15 a.m. Mission again to Misburg. Going by way of the North Sea and Wesermunde. Flak at the target was as thick as at Hamburg, but we didn't catch any since we were number three in the low left squadron and peeled right off. Saw enemy fighters at Dummer Lake which got jumped by P-51's from all directions. Saw one fighter go down. This was number 30 mission for me. Alerted for tomorrow again.

Sunday, Nov 5 - Not scheduled

Monday, Nov 6 - Up at 5 a.m. for a mission to Minden to bomb a canal waterway crossing the Weser River. We carried four 2000 pound bombs for the first time. Four planes dropped at the I.P. and we dropped P.F.F. at the target and came home. The only flak was at Osnabruck. When we left Holland, the radio operator, Sgt. Cassidy said a bomb was hung up in the bomb bay so we took it to the jettison point and finally got it loose with a screwdriver. The Colonel was hopping mad.

Tuesday Nov 7 - Stood down.

Wednesday, Nov 8 - Stood down.

Thursday, Nov 9 - Awake at 4 a.m. Briefing at 5 a.m. for a mission to

C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS 2d BOMBARDMENT DIVISION
Office of the Commanding General
APO 558

11 November 1944

GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 298)

E X T R A C T

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in Paragraph 2b, Section I, Circular 56, Hq European T of Opns, U.S. Army, 27 May 1944, and Letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, 23 September 1944, File No. 200.6, Subject: "Awards and Decorations", the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS is awarded to the following named Officer, for extraordinary achievement, as set forth in citation.

Citation: For extraordinary achievement, while serving as Navigator of B-24 airplanes on many bombardment missions over enemy occupied Continental Europe. Displaying superior navigational ability, this Officer has materially aided in the successful completion of each of these missions. The courage, coolness and exceptional skill displayed by this Officer on all these occasions reflect the highest credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.

* * *
JONATHAN R. BICKEL O-712756 1st Lt. Myerstown, Pa.
* * *

By command of Major General KEPNER:

FRANCIS H. GRISWOLD
Brigadier General U.S.A.
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

s/George L. Paul
t/GEORGE L. PAUL
Major AGD
Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION: Special Awards.

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

J. E. Griggs
J. E. GRIGGS
Capt., MC
Asst. Adj.

support troops between Metz and Nancy. Everything went smoothly. Only two bursts of flak. Carried the propaganda leaflets. Ran into severe snowstorms over the field on return and I got lost for awhile. Final-

HEADQUARTERS
FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY SEVENTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
A.F. Station 145

APC 558

2 December 1944

To Whom It May Concern:

1ST LT JONATHAN H BICKEL, O-712754, has recently completed a tour of duty over enemy occupied Europe and Germany, during which time he participated in thirty-five (35) operational bombing missions as a Navigator on a B-24 "Liberator" airplane.

1ST LT BICKEL has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with three (3) Oak Leaf Clusters.

1ST LT BICKEL's Squadron Commander has given him an efficiency rating of excellent for his general performance of duty and has recommended that he be returned to the Zone of Interior for duty as an Instructor Navigator.

In the capacity of Navigator, LT BICKEL has had the opportunity to gain excellent aerial gunnery experience.

I am pleased to commend LT BICKEL and to have had him as a member of my command, and I will appreciate any consideration which may be shown to him.

CLARENCE J. BROWNE
Colonel, Air Corps
Commanding

ly got down. It is snowing again tonight. I'm scheduled to be squadron navigation officer for tomorrow.

Friday, Nov 10 - Stood down.

Saturday, Nov 11 - Mission to Bottrop at the heart of the Ruhr. Much flak but we didn't catch any.

Monday, Nov 20 - Practice mission with Oscar Leathers.

Tuesday, Nov 21 - Briefing at 6 a.m. for a mission to Harburg. We went across the North Sea to Hamburg. There was plenty of flak. Enough to scare the daylights out of us. We didn't get any holes, however, and had excellent results on the bombing. Caught flak coming in at the coast and upon leaving.

Wednesday, Nov 22 - We stood down and went to town and saw Rebecca and the Hairy Ape. Lived on cheese sandwiches all day.

Thursday, Nov 23 - Stood down after getting up for a mission which was scrubbed.

Friday, Nov 24 - Rained all day

Saturday, Nov 25 - Started on a mission. Assembly was over splasher 11 but after getting to 21,000 feet at 40 degrees below zero, number one engine went out so we aborted.

Sunday, Nov 26 - Flew a practice mission all day with Lt. Foster and Lt. Rothchild.

Monday, Nov 27 - We finally finished up our number 35, which was a long mission to Offenburg, south of Strasburg. We saw the Swiss Alps for the first time and they are beautiful. There was very little flak. Somebody dropped a bomb on us over splasher 5, but it missed us and we're still here. There's no feeling like the feeling of being finished. It's really a nice feeling. No more missions. No more ground school.
Phase Life After Combat

The mission of November 27th to Offenburg concluded my offi-

cial combat tour of duty. We had flown 35 times into the “valley of the shadow of death.” My favorite Bible verse from the 23rd Psalm gave me some assurance that I might survive this ordeal. And now it was finally over and quite unbelievable. Up until the 1st of July 1944, a crew had to complete 25 missions because with heavy losses only 25% of the first crews were able to complete their tours. Our fighter escort planes, mostly P-51s were equipped with extra gas tanks and could fly along for protection to most targets. So since we had a better change of surviving, they raised the odds and made us fly 35 missions. It was a carrot and stick approach. If one survived six missions, one received an Air Medal. At 12, one received an Oak Leaf Cluster, at 18 and 24 more clusters but if one was still alive at 30 one received a Distinguished Flying Cross. This is a beautiful blue, white, and red ribbon from which dangles a bronze propeller.

On November 11, 1944, I received mine and it's one of my favorite medals. We called them “Hero Pins” though we did not think of ourselves as heroes. Just lucky to be alive and thankful.

Our December 1, 1944, my 22nd birthday, I received my official special orders relieving me of combat duty and placing me on temporary duty with the 437th Troop Carrier Group based at Swindon close to Reading. Meintz and Farrell also were with me at this base. The base had a lot of C-47s, gliders, and a lot of paratroopers. The paratroopers were housed inside a huge fenced off area of the base. Maybe some would have gone A.W.O.L. if they had the chance.

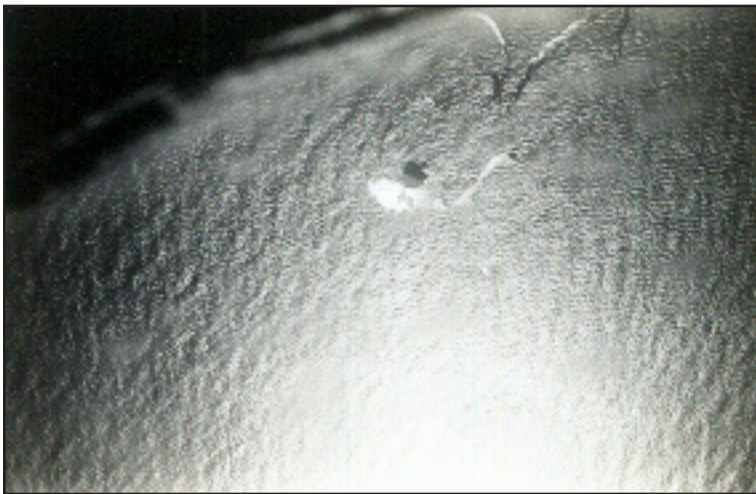
It was cold, damp, and raw as this was England at 52 degrees North Latitude in winter.

Our barracks had the usual pot-bellied stove but little fuel. I used to hunt for discarded coke in the woods and used it in the stove. I had three blankets folded in half under me on my bed and six folded in half for covers. I was always cold and made up my mind that I would get an electric blanket if and when I got back to the states. I have had several all of these years and wouldn't be without one.

I sat out the Battle of the Bulge and did not hang around the operations room. No desire to fly on a C-47. Finally on Jan. 12, 1945, I re-



Coast of Greenland



Icebergs of the North Atlantic

ceived orders to return to the states and on Jan. 22 was assigned to travel my Military Aircraft (C-54) to the states.

Finally on January 27, we departed England, flew across the North Atlantic and came over New York City on the way to Washington, D.C. The Statue of Liberty was a great thrill as she appeared off over our right side. We arrived in Washington on the 28th and I was given a delay enroute of 21 days. After the furlough I reported on Feb 23 to Miami Beach for R and R (Rest and Recuperation). So I was right back to where I had started from two years earlier. It would have been nice to spend the rest of my Air Force days in Miami Beach but March 6th I received orders to ship out to Ellington Field in Houston Texas. Some Captain had a new Buick convertible, and we drove to Houston with a memorable stop at Antoin's in New Orleans.

I had advanced navigation training at Ellington and lived off the base. I lived in a private home and visited the local drug

store after work. A young man named Alton Williamson worked there as a sodajerk. He was in 10th or 11th grade and made the extra thick shakes that I craved while in England. We kept in touch after I was discharged, and I would have liked to see him again, but he passed on 5



B-24s which were returned to the Boneyard in Tucson, Az, waiting to be dismantled

years ago. While in Houston, I bought a Cushman 4 H.P. motor scooter. That was great transportation. The government crated it and sent it free of charge to my new stations. May 13th I was sent to Rosecrans Field in St. Joseph, Mo. For training in ATC (Air Transport Command) procedures.



Adamson House, Prestwick Scotland
Our hotel prior to picking up a B-24 to bring back to the States

St. Joe was the Eastern Terminal of the Pony Express. I was en-

joying my motor scooter seeing the countryside. At this base our mess hall workers were German POW's. I didn't attempt to converse with them, though they were probably there through no fault of their own. From here it was Romulus AFB Michigan.



On July 6th, I was assigned to go to Salinas Air Force Base in California to assist in delivering C-46 Ds to the far East. When I

Jonathan and I took an orientation ride on the All-American, the only flying B-24, which flew into the Lancaster Airport.

arrived in Salinas, I learned that we were to fly C-46s to Biak,

New Guinea. Now that's a long way from home and a lot of Pacific water to traverse. I had no intention of imitating Fred Noonan (Amelia Earheart's navigator) and getting lost somewhere in the Pacific. As luck would have it, the ships carrying plane parts were not to get to New Guinea for another four to six weeks, so we were sent home.

My next mission was July 27 when my orders sent me to Ft. Totten, N. Y. for transportation to Prestwick, Scotland for the purpose of securing B-24 type aircraft and delivering them to Bradley Field Connecticut. We were a crew of five consisting of two pilots, navigator, engineer and a radio operator. We flew over to Prestwick and stayed in some Lord's mansion until we were taken to pick up a war weary B-24. We flew home on a route south of Greenland which looked cold and snowy out our right window. The icebergs were fascinating, and I hoped we would not go down to check them out. I had borrowed my Brother-in-laws Argus C-3 camera so I got some interesting pictures. From Bradley Field, the planes were taken to Tucson, Arizona and scrapped.

90 My next mission was to Kindley Field, Bermuda on Sept. 11. I enjoyed

Bermuda and was ordered to be the navigator on a plane to Miami. While there we were holed up in a hotel as a hurricane came by. When I finally got to the base, I was given a telegram which said, "Please advise Lt. Bickel of father's death."

By the time I got home, Pop had been buried for a week. The telegram had been sent to Romulus, MI. then to Bermuda and finally to Miami. Date of death was 9-12-45. He had slipped and fell off a barn roof. His boss made him work on the roof even though it was wet. Since he thought he needed the money and didn't want to be fired, he went on the roof. From home I reported to Romulus Field, MI and was discharged the 11th day of October 1945.

I had decided to go to Penn State and enrolled there in dairy husbandry. Classes started Friday, October 28. I had a room in 805 W. Foster with Dean Charles and Grace Wagner. He was dean of liberal arts and dropped dead of a heart attack at 52 years of age in his office on campus shortly after I came to live with them. I became Mrs. Wagner's helper and if I brought meat home she would cook the meal.

I graduated in spring of '47 and got a job teaching veterans. There was an "on the farm training program." For vets who wanted to become farmers. I conducted night classes once a week at the Shoemakersville and Wilson High Schools. They got \$90 a month to help them get started in farming.

I also had to visit them on their farms, offer any advice, socialize, and learn from them. After the program folded in 1953-54, I went back to Penn State for a year to get education credits and teacher certification. I did my student teaching at Schaefferstown High School under the guidance of Ag teacher Harvey A. Smith and met Lucy Bamberger, the Home Economics teacher. I taught vocational agriculture at the Northern Lebanon High School, married Lucy and fathered one son, Jonathan. Jonathan studied at Penn State, became an English teacher at ELCO High School, yearbook advisor, and the organizer of this book. He married Maria Piscitelli in 2000, and they have one daughter born Dec. 26, 2003 named Lucy Marie.

WESTOVER FIELD TRAINING MISSIONS

APRIL 6	B24D	1:10
13	" J	2:40
18	" H	1:30
19	" J	6:00
26	" E	2:15
27	" E	1:30
	" H	5:00
30	" J	3:30
MAY 3	" H	5:20
5	" H	4:00
6	" E	5:10
10	" J	5:15
11	" H	6:30
12	" H	4:00
13	" J	4:00
15	" J	5:30
17	" J	5:15
19	" H	5:45
20	" H	5:30
26	" H	6:15
27	" H	5:30
28	" H	5:30

The following pages were submitted by John Bosko, Assistant Engineer and Waist Gunner. John was an FAA certified flight instructor. He owned a P-51 and also a North American SNJ5.



JUNE 18	B24J	MITCHELL FIELD - DOW FIELD WESTOVER - BANGOR, ME.	4:10
19	"	GOOSE BAY - LABRADOR DOW FIELD - LABRADOR	3:00
		GOOSE BAY - GREENLAND	3:30
		GREENLAND - ICELAND	4:00
		ICELAND - IRELAND (WUTTS COR)	5:00 19:45
PRACTICE MISSIONS			
JULY 19	" H	RACKHEATH, ENG - LOCAL	4:00
22	" J	" " "	3:00
27	" H	" " "	3:00
30	" H	" " "	4:30
AUG 4	" H	" " "	4:00
15	" J	" " "	3:30
8:00	" J	" " "	1:00
TRUCKING MISSION			
24	B24H	RACKHEATH, ENG. & ST. QUENTIN FRANCE	
25	"	ST. QUENTIN - RACKHEATH	4:00

MISSION # 1.

JULY 24, 1944.

TARGET - MONTREUL, FRANCE (ST. LO)
CHERBOURG, PENINSULA.

IN SUPPORT OF GROUND FORCES, NO
BOMBS DROPPED, TARGET OBSCURED BY
NINE-TENTHS CLOUDS, FLAK VERY LIGHT
ALTITUDE 15,000 FT, ON OXYGEN 2 HOURS
TIME TO AND FROM TARGET 6 HOURS.
SHIP USED B24H, "THUNDERMUG"

NOTE, MISSION UNEVENTFUL.

MISSION #2

JULY 25, 1944. (ST. LO)

TARGET - MONTREUL, FRANCE

CHERBOURG PENINSULA.

IN SUPPORT OF GROUND FORCES, FRAGMENTATION BOMBS DROPPED FROM 11,000 FT. ON TARGET AREA 4 1/2 MI. LONG. 1 1/4 WIDE, FLAK HEAVY, VISUALLY OBSERVED 2 B24'S KNOCKED DOWN IN FLAMES, ON OXYGEN APPROX. 2 HOURS, TOTAL MISSION TIME 5:15 HOURS SHIP USED B24H - "TANGERINE."

NOTE, MISSION ^{COMPLETED} FULLFILLED

MISSION #3

JULY 29, 1944

TARGET - OIL STORAGE PLANT
BREMEN, GERMANY

TAKE-OFF MADE WITH 24-250LB DEMOLITION BOMBS + 4 LARGE CLUSTER BOMBS, 40 MINUTES FROM T.O. OVER THE NORTH SEA ENGINE #2 MANIFOLD PRESSURE DROPPED, WE RETURNED TO BASE TOTAL TIME 1:20 SHIP "VALIANT LADY."
MISSION ABORTED.

MISSION #4

AUG. 1, 1944.

TARGET - FLYING BOMB EMPLACEMENT
VILLERS LE HOPITAL, FRANCE

TAKE-OFF MADE WITH 12-250LB TIME FUSED DEMOLITION BOMBS, RADAR SHIP LEADING WHICH ORDERED MISSION TO BE ABANDONED DUE TO SOLID OVERCAST BELOW + DANGER OF HITTING THE FRENCH CIVILIAN POPULATION, BOMBS JETTISONED ON DESIGNATED SPOT IN ENGLISH CHANNEL, TIME ON OXYGEN APPROX. 2 HOURS, TOTAL FLYING TIME 6:15 HOURS. SHIP "VALIANT LADY."

CREDITED WITH SORTIE.

MISSION #5

AUG. 2, 1944.

TARGET - FLYING BOMB EMPLACEMENT
VILLERS LE HOPITAL, FRANCE.

TOOK OFF WITH 24-250LB. DEMOLITION BOMBS, LIGHT FLAK OVER TARGET + ROCKET BOMBS, OUR BOMBS DROPPED ON PRESCRIBED TARGET FROM ALT. OF 21,000 FT. TIME ON OXYGEN 3 HRS. HYDRAULIC SYSTEM SHOT OUT BY FLAK, TAIL TURRET HYDRAULIC SYSTEM INOPERATIVE HAD TO BE MANUALLY CONTROLLED, RETURNED TO BASE SAFELY AFTER A ROUGH TRIP TOTAL FLYING TIME 5:30 HRS. B24 USED "WILD IRISH ROSE"

Mission # 6

AUG. 3, 1944

TARGET - OIL STORAGE DEPOT
LILLE, FRANCE

TOOK OFF LOADED WITH 24 X 250 LB.
DEMOLITION BOMBS, MADE 2 PASSES
OVER TARGET BUT DID NOT DROP
BOMBS DUE TO CLOUDS OVER TARGET
ALTITUDE 23,000 FT., ON OXYGEN FOR
2 1/2 HRS, RETURNED TO BASE VIA
BELGIUM + HOLLAND TO AVOID
HEAVY FLAK, ^{HEAVY} FLAK OVER
TARGET, TOTAL TIME 5:30 HRS
SHIP USED B-24-H "SLUGGER JUNIOR"
RECEIVED 2 FLAK HOLES ^{ENGINE COOLING} ^{NOSE TURRET}

NOTE - ~~MISSION SUCCESSFUL AND~~
CREDITED

Mission # 7

AUG. 4, 1944

TARGET - HEINKEL AIRCRAFT FACTORY
ROSTOCK, GERMANY.

TOOK OFF WITH 10 X 500 LB DEMO-
LITION BOMBS, DROPPED BOMBS
SMACK ON ASSEMBLY PLANT OF
FACTORY + ADJOINING BUILDINGS
FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 23,500 FT.
TARGET WAS CLEAR + BOMBING
ACCURATE, ON OXYGEN FOR 5 HOURS
TOTAL TIME WAS 7:30 HOURS
SHIP USED B-24-H "SLUGGER JUNIOR"
ROUTE WAS VIA DENMARK TO + FROM
TARGET. - FLAK WAS HEAVY.
GAS LOAD WAS 2300 GALS.

NOTE - MISSION HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL
AND CREDITED

Mission # 8

AUG. 5, 1944.

TARGET - JUNKERS AIRCRAFT FACTORY
BRUNSWICK, GERMANY.

TOOK OFF AT 0740 WITH 52 X 100 LB.
INCENDIARY BOMBS WHICH WERE
DROPPED SQUARELY ON THE JUPP
ASSEMBLY PLANT AFTER PASSING
OVER DENSE BLACK SMOKE WAS
VISIBLE OVER TARGET INDICATING
DIRECT HITS, BOMBING ALTITUDE
22,000 FT. VISIBILITY WAS VERY
GOOD, BERLIN COULD BE SEEN IN THE
DISTANCE AND ALL OVER GERMANY
PALLS OF DENSE BLACK SMOKE
COULD BE SEEN WHERE OTHER
BOMBERS WREAKED THEIR HAVOC
OF DESTRUCTION. LANDED AT 1715
TOTAL TIME WAS 7:45 HRS. ON OXYGEN
5:30 HRS. SHIP USED B-24J "PROWLER"
FLAK WAS VERY HEAVY

MISSION SUCCESSFUL AND CREDITED

Mission # 9

AUG. 6, 1944.

TARGET - OIL REFINERY, ELBE RIVER
HAMBURG, GERMANY.

TOOK OFF LOADED WITH 2500 GAL. OF
GASOLINE AND 12 X 500 LB. DEMOLITION
BOMBS, APPROACHING TARGET FROM THE
NORTH AN INTENSE CONCENTRATION OF
FLAK WAS DIRECTED AT OUR SQUADRON
WHICH REMAINED INTACT THRU OUT,
BOMBS WERE DROPPED ^{ALT. 22,000} SQUARELY ON
THE TARGET, DENSE BLACK SMOKE WAS
SEEN EMANATING FROM THE TARGET
FOR A DISTANCE OF 50 MILES
ON OXYGEN 4:30 HRS., TOTAL TIME
WAS 6:45 HRS., SHIP USED WAS A
B-24-H "SLUGGER JR." FLAK HOLES
WERE FOUND THRU OUT THE SHIP.
2 OF OUR SHIPS WENT DOWN AMONGST
THE CREW OF "PERILS OF PAULINE" WAS
BERNARD LEPAR A CREW MEMBER OF OURS
WHO WAS ASSIGNED TO FILL IN.

MISSION SUCCESSFUL AND CREDITED

MISSION # 10

AUG. 8, 1944.

TARGET - ENEMY AIRFIELD

CLASTRES NR ST. QUENTIN, FRANCE

TOOK OFF THIS MORNING LOADED WITH 2300 GALS. OF GAS AND 24 X 250 LB. DEMOLITION BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED FROM 20,000 FT. ON THE RUNWAYS PUTTING THEM OUT OF COMMISSION, MODERATE FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED BUT IT WAS FAIRLY ACCURATE, WE RECEIVED SEVERAL FLAK HOLES, ON OXYGEN FOR 3:30 HRS. TOTAL TIME WAS 5:45 HOURS, SHIP USED WAS A B-24-H "TANGERINE"

MISSION # 11

AUG. 9, 1944.

TARGET - RAILROAD MARSHALING YARDS

SAARBRUCKEN, GERMANY

TOOK OFF EARLY THIS MORNING LOADED WITH 2700 GALS. OF GAS + 10 CLUSTER BOMBS EACH CONTAINING 50 X 2 LB. INCENDIARY BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED ON THE TARGET AND SURROUNDING AREAS CREATING MANY LARGE FIRES ALT. 17,000 FT. MODERATE FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED BUT IT WAS ACCURATE BRINGING DOWN 2 OF OUR B-24's, ONE OF WHICH WENT DOWN IN FLAMES 4 OF THE CREW WERE SEEN TO BAIL OUT TIME ON OXYGEN 4 HRS., TOTAL TIME WAS 6 HRS. SHIP USED WAS A B-24-J

"THE PROWLER"

MISSION # 12.

AUG. 11, 1944.

TARGET - RAILROAD MARSHALING YARDS
STRASBOURG, ^{GERMANY}

MADE TAKE-OFF EARLY TODAY LOADED WITH 2500 GALS. OF GAS + 12 X 500 LB. DEMOLITION BOMBS UPON REACHING THE TARGET THEY WERE DROPPED DIRECTLY ON THE OBJECTIVE FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 21,500 FT. MODERATE FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED BUT VERY INACCURATE 3 "SCARECROWS" WERE SEEN, TOTAL FLYING TIME WAS 4:45 HRS. OF WHICH 4:15 HRS WAS ON OXYGEN, SHIP USED WAS A B-24-H "VALIANT LADY"

Mission #13

AUG. 12, 1944.

TARGET- HANGARS, ENEMY AIRFIELD
RHEIMS, FRANCE.

AFTER BEING BRIEFED REGARDS OUR
TARGET AT 3 A.M. WE TOOK OFF AT 5:20AM.
LOADED WITH 2600 GALS. OF GAS AND
12X 500 LB. DEMOLITION BOMBS WE FLEW
VIA LONDON + S.E. COAST OF ENGLAND TO
THE CHERBOURG PENINSULA A FLAK FREE
AREA THENCE TO THE TARGET WHERE
OUR BOMBS WERE DROPPED FROM AN
ALTITUDE 20,400 FT, RESULTS WERE
EXCELLENT AS HANGARS WERE COMPLETELY
DEMOLISHED, FLAK OVER TARGET WAS
MEAGER + INACCURATE, RETURNED VIA
BELGIUM + HOLLAND, TIME ON OXYGEN
WAS 4:45 HRS. TOTAL FLYING TIME WAS
7:15 HRS. SHIP USED WAS A B-24-H, THE
"VALIANT LADY."

Mission # 14

AUG. 13, 1944.

TARGET- FERRY + SLIP ON THE ^{SEINE} VIRE RIVER
DU CLAIR, E of ROUEN. FRANCE

AFTER AN EARLY TAKE OFF WITH 2300 GALS
OF GAS AND 48X 100 LB. DEMOLITION
BOMBS PROCEEDED TO THE TARGET VIA
SOUTHERN ENGLAND PASSING OVER
LONDON THENCE NORTH OF THE CHERBOURG
PENINSULA DIRECTLY TO THE TARGET,
BOMBS WERE DROPPED SCORING 50%
HITS FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 17,500 FT.
MISSION WAS PLANNED TO SUPPORT THE
GROUND TROOPS MAKING AN ADVANCE +
TO CUT OFF ENEMY TROOPS, LIGHT FLAK.
TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 2 HRS., TOTAL
MISSION TIME WAS 5:15 HRS.
SHIP USED WAS A B-24-J NO. 354, HWR
1ST MISSION, IT WAS UNNAMED

Mission # 15

AUG. 18, 1944.

TARGET- AERO ENGINE FACTORY
WOIPPY, NR METZ, FRANCE.

MADE THE TAKE-OFF WITH 2500 GALS OF
GAS + 12X 500 LB. BOMBS (DEMOLITION)
PROCEEDED TO TARGET OVER TERRITORY
NEWLY OCCUPIED BY OUR TROOPS, THE
BOMBS WERE DROPPED ON THE TARGET
WITH AMAZING ACCURACY FROM 18,000 FT
COMPLETELY DEMOLISHING THE FACTORY,
FLAK WAS SEEN AT A DISTANCE LIGHT +
INACCURATE. TIME ON OXYGEN WAS
4 HRS., TOTAL TIME WAS 8:15 HRS.
SHIP USED WAS A B-24-H "VALIANT
LADY."

Mission # 16

AUG. 24, 1944.

TARGET- SYNTHETIC OIL REFINERY
^{ERSE NR. HANNOVER}
MAGDEBURG, GERMANY.

TOOK OFF EARLY THIS MORNING
LOADED WITH 2700 GALS OF GAS AND
12X 500 GENERAL PURPOSE BOMBS
(DEMOLITION) WHICH WERE DROPPED
ON TARGET MAKING A DIRECT HIT
ON THE DISTILLERY FROM AN ALTITUDE
OF 22,000 FT. - A GIGANTIC EXPLOSION
WAS SEEN AND THE WHOLE PLANT
WAS A MASS OF FLAME - FLAK WAS
INTENSE. - TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 4:30 HRS
TOTAL TIME WAS 7:00 HOURS - SHIP
USED WAS A B-24-H "SLUGGER JR."
RETURNED TO BASE ON 3 ENGINES AS
#1 ENG. LOST OIL PRESSURE AND HAD TO
BE FEATHERED.

Mission # 17
Aug. 25, 1944.

TARGET - F.W. 190, AIRCRAFT FACTORY
LÜBECK, GERMANY.

TOOK OFF EARLY TODAY 7:30 AM
LOADED WITH 2700 GALS. OF GAS AND
10X500 LB. GENERAL PURPOSE DEMOLITION
BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED FROM AN
ALTITUDE OF 21,500 FT. SCORING 25%
HITS ON THE FACTORY - MODERATE
FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED BY OUR SQUAD-
RON - TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 5:30 HRS
TOTAL FLYING TIME WAS 8 HOURS
SHIP USED WAS A B-24-H "SUPER WOLF"

Mission # 18
Aug. 26, 1944.

TARGET - UNDERGROUND OIL STORAGE PLANT
DOLMAN, GERMANY.

MADE AN EARLY TAKE-OFF WITH 2300
GALS. OF GAS AND 24X250 LB. DEMOLITION
BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED FROM AN
ALTITUDE OF 20,000, HITTING APPROX.
100 YDS WIDE OF TARGET BUT PUTTING
THE RAILROAD TURN OFF, OUT OF
COMMISSION OTHER SQUADRONS MADE
DIRECT HITS ON THE SAME TARGET
SOME SHIPS CARRIED GERMAN MEAT
RATION COUPONS WHICH WERE NEATLY
DISTRIBUTED. TIME ON OXYGEN WAS
3:45 HRS. TOTAL TIME WAS 5:30 HRS.
SHIP USED WAS A B-24-H "ANONYMOUS"
FLAK WAS VERY MEAGER.

Mission # 19
Aug. 27, 1944.

TARGET - F.W. 190 AIRCRAFT PLANT
BERLIN, GERMANY.

AFTER TAKING OFF EARLY THIS MORNING
LOADED WITH 2700 GALS. OF GAS AND
10X500 LB. GENERAL PURPOSE DEMOLITION
BOMBS WE PROCEEDED TO THE TARGET,
UPON REACHING THE NORTHERN GERMAN
COAST JUST BELOW DENMARK WHEN WE
WERE RECALLED, MISSION HAD BEEN
"SCRUBBED" LIGHT FLAK WAS SEEN IN THE
DISTANCE - MADE 180° TURN AND RETURN-
ED TO THE BASE. TIME ON OXYGEN WAS
3:30 HRS. TOTAL TIME WAS 5:30 HRS.
A SUDDEN MOVEMENT OF A WARM FRONT
OF VERY WIDE SCOPE KEPT US FROM
COMPLETING THE MISSION. SHIP
USED WAS A B-24-H "SLUGGER JR."

Mission IN-COMPLETED BUT CREDITED

Mission # 20
SEPT. 8, 1944

TARGET - RAILROAD MARSHALING YARDS
KARLSRUHE, GERMANY.

MADE THE TAKE-OFF TODAY LOADED WITH
2700 GALS. OF GAS AND 6X1000 LB. G.P.
BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED ON THIS
VERY IMPORTANT RAILROAD YARDS WHICH
SERVED AS A FEEDER OF ENEMY TROOPS
FOR THE SIEGFRIED LINES IN SOUTH
GERMANY, OUR BOMBING ALTITUDE WAS
24000 FT, IT WAS SEVERELY COLD AS
THE TEMP WAS -40° C, CAUSING IM-
MEDIATE FROST-BITE UPON REMOVAL OF
ONES GLOVES OR OTHER CLOTHING, DIRECT
HITS WERE SCORED ON TARGET COMPLETELY
OBLITERATING IT. TIME ON OXYGEN 7 HOURS
TOTAL TIME WAS 9 HOURS. INTENSE &
ACCURATE FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED, SHIP
USED WAS A B24H "SLUGGER JR."

Mission SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED AND
CREDITED.

MISSION # 23.

SEPT. 11, 1944.

TARGET- UNKNOWN TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY.

STENDAL, GERMANY

NR. MAGDEBURG

TOOK OFF AGAIN THIS MORNING WITH 2700 GALS. OF GAS + 10 X 500 LB. G.P. BOMBS FOR THE PRIMARY TARGET AN OIL REFINERY AT MAGDEBURG BUT ON ARRIVAL THERE THE TARGET WAS OBSCURED BY A SOLID OVERCAST THENCE WE PROCEEDED TO THIS TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY WHICH WAS A LARGE INDUSTRIAL PLANT- "BOMBS AWAY" ALTITUDE WAS 22500 FT. RESULTS OF THE BOMBING WAS NOT DISCERNABLE AS THE TARGET WAS PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CUMULUS CLOUDS - TEMP. WAS -32°C TIME ON OXYGEN 5:30 HRS. TOTAL FLYING

MISSION # 25

OCT. 7, 1944.

TARGET- KRUPP ARMAMENT PLANT.

MAGDEBURG, GERMANY.

OUR LOAD CONSISTED OF 2500 GALS. OF GAS AND 6 X 1000 LB. DEMOLITION BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 23,000 FT. SCORING DIRECT HITS ON THE TARGET, OBLITERATING IT - MORE THAN 3000 HEAVY BOMBERS TOOK PART IN RAIDING VARIOUS PARTS OF GERMANY TODAY, OURS WAS CONSIDERED MOST SUCCESSFUL - MODERATE BUT ACCURATE FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED OVER THE TARGET HITTING US IN SEVERAL PLACES BUT WITHOUT CAUSING SERIOUS DAMAGE OR CASUALTY - TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 4:30 HRS., TOTAL TIME WAS 7 HRS., SHIP USED WAS A B-24H "ANONYMOUS."

MISSION COMPLETED + CREDITED

MISSION # 24

OCT. 6, 1944.

TARGET- ENEMY AIRFIELD

PADERBORN, GERMANY

TOOK OFF AGAIN EARLY TODAY LOADED WITH 2500 GALS. OF GAS AND 12 X 500 LB. DEMOLITION BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED DIRECTLY ON THE TARGET, DENSE BLACK SMOKE ENSUED INDICATING HITS ON OIL STORAGE & OTHER IMPORTANT BUILDINGS. BOMB DROPPING ALTITUDE WAS 22,000 FT. AT THE GROUP L.P. WE LOST #3 ENGINE CAUSING US TO STRAGGLE BACK TO BASE BUT FIGHTER PROTECTION WAS EXCELLENT AND WE RECEIVED NO ENEMY FIGHTER OPPOSITION - TIME

MISSION # 26

OCT. 8, 1944.

TARGET- RAILROAD MARSHALING YARD

COBLENZ, GERMANY

MADE OUR TAKE-OFF AT 11:20 AM. TOOK OFF LOADED WITH 2700 GALS. OF GAS AND 2 X 1000 LB. DEMOLITION BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 23,000 FT. BY P.F.F. INSTRUMENTS (RADAR) ON THE TARGET AS IT WAS OBSCURED BY A SOLID LAYER OF CLOUDS - RESULTS OF BOMBING IS UNKNOWN - LIGHT AND INACCURATE FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED. TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 4 HRS., TOTAL FLIGHT TIME WAS 6 HRS., SHIP USED WAS A B-24J THE "MARY ELLEN"

MISSION COMPLETED + CREDITED.

Mission #27
Oct. 17, 1944.

TARGET- MARSHALING YARDS (R.R.)
COLOGNE, GERMANY.

WE WERE AWAKENED VERY EARLY THIS MORNING SO AS TO TAKE OFF AT 6:00 AM. OUR LOAD WAS 2500 GALS. OF GAS AND 6X500 LB. GP BOMBS PLUS 6X500 LB. INCENDIARY CLUSTER BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED ON THE TARGET BY INSTRUMENTS (RADAR) FROM AN ALTITUDE 22,500 FT. - THE RESULTS COULD NOT BE IMMEDIATELY ASCERTAINED DUE TO TARGET BEING COMPLETELY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS - FLAK WAS MEAGER AND INACCURATE TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 5 HRS. - TOTAL FLIGHT TIME WAS 6:45 HRS. - SHIP USED WAS A B-24J THE "MARY ELLEN." MISSION WAS A MAXIMUM EFFORT.

Mission #28
Oct. 22, 1944

TARGET- R.R. MARSHALING YARDS.
HAMM, GERMANY

MADE AN EARLY TAKE-OFF AGAIN TODAY LOADED WITH 2300 GALS. OF GAS. AND 20X250 LB. GP BOMBS ALSO 2X500 LB. INCENDIARY CLUSTER BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED ON THE TARGET BY RADAR INSTRUMENTS FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 23,000 FT. - RESULTS WERE NOT IMMEDIATELY ASCERTAINED AS THE TARGET WAS OBSCURED BY CLOUDS FLAK WAS VERY LIGHT - INACCURATE TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 3 HRS - TOTAL FLIGHT TIME WAS 5:45 HRS. - SHIP USED WAS A B-24-J "BOOMERANG"

Mission #29
Oct. 30, 1944

TARGET- OIL REFINERY (SYNTHETIC)
HARBURG, GERMANY.

OUR LOAD TODAY CONSISTED OF 2500 GALS. OF GAS AND 20X300 LB. G.I. BOMBS - WE WERE BRIEFED TO THE EFFECT THAT OUR TARGET COULD BE VISUALLY BOMBED BUT UPON ARRIVING OVER THE TARGET AREA WE FLEW INTO A DENSE FRONT FORCING OUR FORMATION TO BREAK UP LEAVING US FLYING OVER GERMANY ALONE UPON REACHING A HEAVY FLAK AREA NEAR BREMEN WE SALVOED THE BOMBS HOPING THEY HIT SOME VITAL MILITARY OBJECTIVE TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 3 HRS - TOTAL TIME WAS 5:45 HRS. SHIP USED WAS B-24-J THE "MARY ELLEN"

Mission #30
Nov. 2, 1944

TARGET- R.R. MARSHALING YARD
BIELEFELD, GERMANY.

OUR LOAD TODAY WAS 2500 GALS. OF GAS & 16X250 LB. GP, 4X500 LB. INCENDIARY WHICH WERE DROPPED ON THE TARGET WITH GREAT ACCURACY FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 23,000 FT. TEMP. AT ALTITUDE WAS -33°, FLAK WAS MEAGER AND INACCURATE. TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 3:30 HRS, TOTAL FLYING TIME WAS 5:45 HRS, SHIP USED WAS A B-24J "THE MARY ELLEN"

MISSION #31
NOV. 4, 1944.

TARGET - OIL REFINERY
MISBURG, GERMANY.

LOADED WITH 2600 GALS. OF GAS AND 56X500 LB. G.P. WE TOOK OFF TO DROP OUR BOMBS ON THE OIL STORAGE TANKS OF THE TARGET FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 23,000 FT. - BOMBING WAS VIA R.F.F. (RADAR) AS THE TARGET WAS OBSCURED BY 710M CLOUDS, RESULTS WERE PARTLY ASCERTAINED, FIRES INDICATED SOME DEGREE OF ACCURACY - TEMP. WAS -40° FLAK WAS INTENSE AND ACCURATE BLOWING UP A: B-24 ALSO DAMAGING OTHERS. TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 4:30 HRS TOTAL TIME WAS 6:15 HRS, SHIP USED WAS A B-24-J "MARY ELLEN"

MISSION #32
NOV. 6, 1944

TARGET - MINDEN CANAL LOCKS
MINDEN, GERMANY

WE FLEW TODAY TOWARDS OUR TARGET WITH 2500 GALS. OF GAS AND 4X2000 LB G.P. BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED ON THE TARGET VIA INSTRUMENTS (RADAR) FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 20,000 FT. RESULTS WERE UNKNOWN DUE TO A SOLID OVERCAST BELOW US. TEMP. WAS -28°, NO FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED MAKING THE MISSION UNEVENTFUL - TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 3 HRS - TOTAL TIME WAS 5:45 HRS. SHIP USED WAS A B-24-J "MARY ELLEN"

NOV. 9, 1944

TARGET - FORTS (GERMAN STRONGHOLDS)
METZ, FRANCE.

THE "MARY ELLEN" WAS LOADED WITH 2300 GALS OF GAS AND 2X500 LB. G.P. BOMBS PLUS A NICKEL LOAD "PROPAGANDA LERFLETS" - ALL WERE DROPPED ON THE TARGET AND SURROUNDING GERMAN LINES - RESULTS WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY ASCERTAINED DUE TO 710M CLOUD COVER OVER TARGET - OUR RETURN WAS MET BY LOW VISIBILITY DUE TO A SNOWSTORM - AIRCRAFT WERE ALL OVER THE SKY BUT WE ALL LANDED SAFELY - TEMP. AT ALTITUDE -39°, TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 5:30 HRS. TOTAL TIME WAS 6:30 HRS.

MISSION #34
NOV. 11, 1944

TARGET - OIL REFINERY
BOTTRUP, GERMANY.

OUR TAKE-OFF THIS MORNING WAS MADE WITH A LOAD OF 24X250 GP: & 2300 GALS. OF GAS - BOMBING ALTITUDE WAS 22000 FT. THE TARGET WAS NOT VISUALLY SEEN SO BOMBING WAS DONE VIA INSTRUMENTS (RADAR) MODERATE FLAK WAS ENCOUNTERED - WHICH WAS FAIRLY ACCURATE BUT NO DAMAGE WAS SUSTAINED BY US - TEMP. AT ALTITUDE WAS -28°C - TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 3:30 HOURS - TOTAL FLYING TIME WAS 5:45 HOURS - SHIP USED WAS A B-24-J THE "MARY ELLEN."

MISSION # 35
NOV. 21, 1944

TARGET- OIL REFINERY
HARBURG, GERMANY.

OUR LOAD FOR THIS TARGET CONSISTED OF 2500 GALS. OF GAS + 12X500 GRS WHICH WAS DROPPED SQUARELY ON THE TARGET VIA BOMB SIGHT - FLAK WAS INTENSE BUT WE WERE LUCKY SUSTAINING NO BATTLE DAMAGE BOMBING ALTITUDE WAS 22500 FT, TEMP WAS. -34°C. - TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 4:30 HRS., TOTAL TIME WAS 7:15 HOURS - SHIP USED WAS A B-24-J -

MISSION # 36
NOV. 22, 1944

TARGET- R.R. MARSHALING YARD
BINGEN, GERMANY.

THE "ANGEL" WAS LOADED TODAY WITH 2600 GALS OF GAS + 12X500 LB BOMBS AFTER TAKING OFF FOR SOUTHERN ENGLAND OUR ASSEMBLY AREA #1 ENGINE STARTED ACTING UP - JUST PRIOR TO STARTING OFF ON COURSE THE MANIFOLD PRESSURE DROPPED SHARPLY NECESSITATING FEATHERING THAT ENGINE + ABORTING THE MISSION AFTER BEING AIRBORNE FOR 3:30 HRS.
SHIP WAS A B-24-U "057"

MISSION # 37
NOV. 27, 1944.

TARGET- R.R. MARSHALING YARD
OFFENBURG, GERMANY.

MADE OUR TAKE-OFF THIS MORNING LOADED WITH 2600 GALS. OF GAS + 2X500 GRS AND 10X300 LB. PROPAGANDA + SAFE-CONDUCT BOMBS WHICH WERE DROPPED VIA BOMB-SIGHT AS THE TARGET COULD BE READILY SEEN, RESULTS WERE EXCELLENT - TEMP. AT BOMBING ALT. OF 24,000 FT. WAS -45°C. - TIME ON OXYGEN WAS 5 HOURS - TOTAL FLYING TIME WAS 7:45 HOURS - SHIP USED WAS A B-24-H "273"
NO FLAK ENCOUNTERED, LOTS OF SCARE CROWS THO.
HAD OUR FIRST VIEW OF THE SWISS ALPS POSITIVELY BEAUTIFUL.

SUGGESTED NAMES.

"PACK O' TROUBLE"
"CHALLENGER"
"BOOMERANG"
"JACK POT."
"BLIND DATE"
"HOME RUN"
"FURIOUS"
"BOLD RASCAL"
"DOUBLE TROUBLE"
"RAT CHASER"
"DEVASTATOR"
"INDESTRUCTIBLE"
SLUGGER JR
MARY ELLEN
LT. JOHN BOSKO, O-761861
A.P.O. 16209, 0571.

Official Song of the United States Army Air Corps

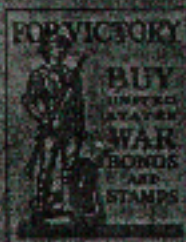
THE ARMY AIR CORPS



Words and Music by

Capt. ROBERT CRAWFORD

Voice and Piano (V1456).....	50
Piano Solo, arr. by Maxwell Eckstein (P2287).....	50
—Simplified version, arr. by M. Eckstein (P2290).....	50
Accordion, arr. by Pietro Deiro (PA35).....	50
Miscellaneous Instruments, arr. for C, Bb, Eb and Bass Clef Instruments, with Piano accompaniment by H. R. Kent (W1851).....	complete 50
Choral Arrangements:	
Mixed Voices - S.A.T.B. (CM4727).....	16
Treble Voices - S.S.A. (CM5308).....	16
Treble Voices - Two-Part (CM5309).....	16
Male Voices - T.T.B.B. (CM2254).....	16
Band (PB189) Stand, Band 1.00; Symph. Band.....	1.75
Band, arr. by David Bennett (Q1296)	
Stand, Band 1.00; Symph. Band.....	1.75
Orchestra, arr. by C. Paul Herfurth (PO153):	
Small Orch. 1.75; Full Orch. 1.15; Piano Part, 20:	
Other Parts, each .10	
Vocal Orchestration, arr. by J. S. Seredy.....	75
Dance Orchestration, arr. by Jack Mason.....	75



To the men who fly

The Army Air Corps

Official Song of the
United States Army Air CorpsWords and Music by
ROBERT CRAWFORD

Alla marcia

Voice

Piano

1. Off we go — in - to the
2. Minds of men — fash-ioned a
4. Off we go — in - to the

mf

wild blue yon - der, Climb-ing high — in - to the sun;
crate of thun - der, Sent it high — in - to the blue;
wild sky yon - der, Keep the wings — lev-el and true;

Here they come, — zoom-ing to meet our thun-der, At 'em, boys, — Give 'er the
Hands of men — blast-ed the world a - sun - der; How they lived — God on-ly
If you'd live — to be a gray-haired won-der Keep the nose — Out of the

Choral Versions: TTBB - CM2254 - 16
SATB - CM4727 - 16
SSA - CM6808 - 16
SA - CM6809 - 16
D A 2 4 6 8 10

gun! (Give 'er the gun now!) Down we dive, — spout-ing our flame from un - der,
knew! (God on-ly knew them!) Souls of men — dream-ing of skies to con-quer
blue! (Out of the blue, boy!) Fly-ing men, — guard-ing the na-tion's bor-der,

Off with one — hell-uv-a*) rear! — We live — in
Gave us wings, — ev-er to soar! — With scouts — be-
We'll be there, — fol-lowed by more! — In ech - e -

fame — Or go down — in flame,
fore — And bomb - ers ga - lore, } SHOUT! No-thing'll stop the Ar - my Air
lon — We car - ry on,

1 Corps! — 2 To 3rd verse Corps! — Last time only Corps! —

gun! (Give 'er the gun now!) Down we dive, — spout-ing our flame from un - der,
knew! (God on-ly knew them!) Souls of men — dream-ing of skies to con-quer
blue! (Out of the blue, boy!) Fly-ing men, — guard-ing the na-tion's bor-der,

Off with one — hell - uy - a *) rear! — We live — in
Gave us wings, — ev - er to soar! — With scouts — be -
We'll be there, — fol - lowed by more! — In ech - e -

fame — Or go down — in flame,
fore — And bomb - ers ga - lore, } SHOUT! No-thing'll stop the Ar - my Air
lon — We car - ry on,

1 Corps! — 2 To 3rd verse Corps! — Last time only Corps! —

Gm C7

drink to those who gave their all of old, Then

F C7

down we float to score the rain-bow's pot of gold, A

F F7 Bb F A7 Dm Bb7 C7

toast to the host of men we boast, the Ar-my Air

F7 D.S.

Corps! gliss. on rolled "r" Zoom!

D.S.



Pamela, McTyre's English Bride, and Raymond McTyre at their home in Stone Mountain, Georgia.

Total Combat ^{MISSION} time: 224:15 *Raymond M. McTyre* TOTAL: 224 ¹/₂ Combat mission hours

NO STAR - MILK RUN
 ★ - LOSS OF FLACK
 ★★ - HEAVY FLACK + FIGHTERS
 ★★★ - VERY HEAVY + FIGHTERS
 RAYMOND M. MCTYRE

PARTICIPATION IN SORTIES
B-24 Liberator Bomber
 has participated in a Heavy Bombardment Sortie on the following dates:
 ★★ Tough - HEAVY FLACK + FIGHTERS ★★ FROM TOUGH

DATE	MISSIONS	DATE	MISSIONS
7-24-44	Montreuil, France (OP. LO) 6:00	11-27-44	Offenburg, Germany 7:45
7-25-44	Montreuil, France (ST. LO) 5:15	9-8-44	★ Karlsruhe, Germany 7:00
8-2-44	Haut-Malenil, France (PARIS) 5:20	9-9-44	★★ Mainz, Germany 6:45
8-3-44	Lille, France 5:00	9-10-44	★★ Ulm, Germany 7:20
8-4-44	★ Rostock, Germany (PRENEMUNDE) 7:30	9-11-44	★ Stendal, Germany 7:15
8-5-44	★ Brunswick/Waggum, Germany 7:45	10-5-44	★★ Paderborn, Germany 5:00
8-6-44	★★ Hamburg, Germany 6:45	10-7-44	★★ Magdeburg, Germany 7:00
8-8-44	Claestres, France 5:40	10-9-44	★ Koblenz, Germany 6:00
8-9-44	★ Searbrucken, Germany 6:00	10-14-44	★★ Cologne, Germany 7:00
8-11-44	★ Strausbou, Germany 7:00	10-17-44	★★ Cologne, Germany 6:45
8-12-44	Mourmelon Le Grand, France 7:15	10-22-44	★★ Hamm, Germany 5:45
8-13-44	Choke Points, France 5:15	10-30-44	★★ Harburg, Germany 5:45
8-18-44	★ Wolppy, France (MARSEILLES) 8:15	11-2-44	★ Bielefeld, Germany 5:45
8-24-44	★ Misburg, Germany 7:20	11-4-44	★★ Misberg, Germany 6:15
8-25-44	★ Lubeck, Germany (BERLIN) 8:00	11-6-44	★ Minden, Germany 5:45
8-27-44	★★ Orlenburg/Finow, Germany 6:30	11-9-44	★★ Metz, Germany 6:30
8-28-44	★ Dülmen, Germany 5:30	11-11-44	★ Bottrop, Germany 5:45
		11-21-44	★★ Harburg, Germany 7:15



RECEIVED

APR 15 1969

ADJUTANT BOARD

Honorable Discharge

This is to certify that

Jonathan E. Bickel

13094033, Avn/C, 1151st Navigation Training Squadron

Army of the United States

*is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military service of the
United States of America*

*This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful
Service to his country.*

Given at Army Air Forces Navigation School, San Marcos Army Air Field,
San Marcos, Texas

Date 25 Feb 44

Recorded in the office for Recording of deeds, etc.

in and for Harris County, Tex., in Comm

Book No. 28 Page 402

WITNESSE my hand and seal of Office

W. D. A. O. 29th NOV 45 Oct. 4, D. 45

William H. Lutz
Recorder

Carl P. Heinz
CARL P. HEINZ
Major, Air Corps
Personnel Adjutant

ENLISTED RECORD OF

Bickel
(Last name)

Jonathan
(First name)

R.
(Middle initial)

13094033
(Army serial number)

Avn/C
(Grade)

Born in **Myerstown** in the State of **Pennsylvania**
 Enlisted on ~~October~~ **6 Nov** 1942 at **Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**
 When enlisted or ~~before~~ he was **nineteen (19) & eleven (11) months** years of age and by occupation a **student**
 He had **eyes, brown** hair, **ruddy** complexion, and was **5** feet **6 1/2** inches in height.
 Completed **1** years, **3** months, **20** days service for longevity pay.
 Prior service: **none**

25 FEB 1944

Noncommissioned officer **no**
 Military qualifications: **Pistol - expert 25 Aug 43**
 Army specialty **Navigator**
 Attendance at **none**

(Name of noncommissioned officers' or special service school) **PAID IN FULL 62.36**

Battles, engagements, skirmishes, expeditions **none**

Decorations, service medals, citations **none**

Wounds received in service **none**

Date and result of smallpox vaccination **2 Mar 43 Vac**

Date of completion of all typhoid-paratyphoid vaccinations **20 Dec 43 Stim.**

Date and result of diphtheria immunity test (Schick) **none**

Date of other vaccinations (specify vaccine used) **Tetanus 13 Apr 43 Comp.**

Physical condition when discharged **Good** Married or single **Single**

Honorably discharged by reason of **AR 615-160 as amended**

Character **Excellent** Periods of active duty **2 1/2**

Remarks **Not entitled to travel pay. No time lost under AW 107.**



APPLICATION
 READJUSTMENT
 20 FEB 1944

Signature of soldier

Jonathan R. Bickel

P.
July 1, 1946

RECORDED

Albert G. Kasarda
ALBERT G. KASARDA
1st Lt., Air Corps
Asst. Pers. Adj.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ENLISTED RECORD

- 1 Enter date of induction only in case of trainees inducted under Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 (Hull. 25, W. 11, 1940); in all other cases enter date of enlistment. Fill in date word not applicable.
- 2 For each enlistment give company, regiment, or arm or service with inclusive dates of service, grade, course of discharge, number of days lost under AW 107 (if none, so stated), and number of days retained and cause of retention in service for convenience of the Government, if any.
- 3 Enter qualifications in arms, horsemanship, etc. Show the qualifications, date thereof, and number, date, and source of order announcing same.
- 4 See paragraph 12, AR 40-210.
- 5 If discharged prior to expiration of service, give number, date, and source of order or full description of authority therefor.
- 6 Enter periods of active duty of enlisted men of the Regular Army Reserve and the Enlisted Reserve Corps, and dates of induction into Federal Service in the cases of members of the National Guard.
- 7 In all cases of men who are entitled to special pay, show the amount and date of payment.

RECEIVED
APR 15 1969

RETIREMENT BOARD



Army of the United States

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that

JONATHAN R. RICKEL 1st Lt. O 712 756
593 AMF BN 3d FOALD Romulus Michigan

*Honorably served in active Federal Service
in the Army of the United States from*

26 February 1944 to 11 October 1945

Given at Separation Base Army Air Field Romulus Michigan

on the 11th *day of* October

1945

Recorded on the office for Retention of Records.

as sent for (State) (County) (City) Comm.

Book No. 33 - 229

WITNESS my hand and seal of Office

this 29 day of Oct. 1945

21 June 1969 JRM

John M. Crewin
JOHN M. CREWIN
Major AC



59776... ISSUED AT: Reading
Name of medal or medals
BY: 200-76331-45

21 June 1969 JRM

MILITARY RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL		2. ARMY SERIAL NUMBER	3. ALC. GRADE	4. ARM OR SERVICE	5. COMPONENT
BICKEL JONATHAN R		0 712 756	1st Lt	AC	AUS
6. ORGANIZATION		7. DATE OF ENTRY FROM ACTIVE DUTY	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION		
553 AAF BU 3d FGATC Romulus Michigan		11 Oct 1945	Romulus AAB Michigan		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES		10. DATE OF BIRTH	11. PLACE OF BIRTH		
RD#1 Myerstown Pa		1 Dec 1922	Myerstown Pa		
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT		13. COLOR EYES	14. COLOR HAIR	15. HEIGHT	16. WEIGHT
Myerstown Pa		Brown	Brown	5'9"	160 LBS.
17. NO. OF DEPENDENTS		18. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND SO.			
0		04.792			
19. MARRITAL STATUS		20. SEX			
S		X			

MILITARY HISTORY

21. SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA		22. SERIALIZED	23. LOCAL B. B. BOARD NUMBER	24. COUNTY AND STATE	25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY
X		X		Berks Pa	Myerstown Pa
26. DATE OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY		27. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO.			
26 Feb 1944		Navigator 1034			
28. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS					
Normandy No France Germany Argennes Forest					
29. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS					
DFC Air Medal with 3 clusters					
30. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION					
None					
31. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED			32. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND ALIENS		
AAFTD Tulsa Okla Agustana Coll. Ill Rosecrans Fld. Mo			AAFMS San Marcos Tex Ellington Fld Tex		
33. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION			34. DATE OF DEPARTURE		
WD HRI-5 30 Apr 1945			19 June 1944		
			27 Jan 1945		
			Eng. ETO		
			US		
			24 Jun 1944		
			27 Jan 1945		
35. CURRENT TOUR OF ACTIVE DUTY			36. EDUCATION (years)		
CONTINENTAL SERVICE			POSTION SERVICE		
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS
1		5	7		8
37. GRADE SCHOOL			38. HIGH SCHOOL		
8			4		
39. COLLEGE			2		

APPLICATION FOR
READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCE
PUBLIC LAW #306
MADE THROUGH
STATE Pa.
DATE July 1, 1946

INSURANCE NOTICE

40. KIND OF INSURANCE						41. HOW PAID		42. PREVIOUS DATE OF LOSS		43. DATE OF EXPIRATION		44. PREMIUM DUE		45. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO	
Y						30 Sept 1945		31 Oct 1945		6.50		X		*	

46. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER BEING SEPARATED		47. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives)	
Jonathan R. Bickel		Lapel Button Issued	
48. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature)		49. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO	
ELEANOR L MARION 1st Lt 48 Assistant Base Adjutant		X	

ENTERED
OCT 29 1945
BERKS CO., PA.

WD 280 FORM 28-28
1 November 1944



CERTIFICATE OF VALOR

The Officers and Men of the 467th Bombardment Group, Heavy,
present this as a testimonial of the Valor of

2nd Lt. Jonathan R. Bickel

His courage and devotion to duty have been an inspiration to all.

Awards

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS, AIR MEDAL
THREE CLUSTERS TO AIR MEDAL

Walter K. Leah
Brig. General - U.S.A.
Commanding
96th Combat Bomb Wing, Heavy.

Albert J. Shover
Colonel - Air Corps
Commanding
467th Bombardment Group





Row 1: Starr Miller, Henry Miller, Jonathan Bickel, Heather Backenstose, LaRoy Moyer, Captain J. Donald Backenstone, Army Chaplain, Row 2: Sheila MacGuire, Pat, June Miller, Grace Miller, Irene Moyer, Craig Showalter, Janette Showalter, Katrina Lape, Mary Backenstose, Row 3: Lucy Bickel, Donna Mary Miller, Steve Miller, Erica Miller, Jennifer Lape, Kathleen Miller, Brian Backenstose



Laroy Moyer, Janette, Robin, Kathleen, and sister Irene Moyer



Cassedy, Farrell, Bosko, Me
in front of P-47 at Long Island
Restaurant



Row 1: Jonathan Bickel, J. Ray, John Bosko, Glenn Young Row 2:
Elna Bosko, Lucy Bickel, Betty Young, Jonathan Young at the Bickel
home enjoying a mini-reunion in 1981.



Family Christmas Picture 1985 - Ray, Jonathan, Lucy, and English Mastiff Lucky



Ray Eisenhower, Class of '39, Bethel High School
S/Sgt 3AD- 96th BG-H 8th Air Force
B17 ball turret gunner and radio operator
DFC, Air Medal has 3 O. L. C., and 2 Presidential Unit Citations
completed 25 missions



Claude Herrington, Classmate of '40, Bethel High School
Tech Sgt 15th AD - 99th BG-H 15th Air Force
B-17 radio operator
Air Medal with 9 Oak Leaf Clusters - completed 50 missions



Pictures placed in my escape kit to be used to make false documents
in case I was shot down over enemy territory.



Bickel Tombstone: Roses for Lucy's Rose
Garden, English Mastiff Heads for Jonathan's dog, and B-24's for J. Ray located
at the Tulpehocken U.C.C. in Millardsville,
PA.



HIGH FLIGHT

By John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered
wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tum-
bling mirth
Of sun-split clouds—and done a hundred
things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and
soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the windswept heights with
easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew.
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of
God.



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S e a

K I N G D O M

C h a n n e l

N E T H E R

The Hague
(s Gravenhage)

B E L G I U M

N O R M A N D Y

Paris



Epilogue:

I have listed day to day experiences in the Air Force as recorded in my diaries. I could not recall all the details of places, people, and missions if I did not have written records. I also have copies of all my army orders with dates and instructions. The newspaper articles from the *Stars and Stripes* Army Newspaper were included in my diary to show that we actually participated on those missions and the results of our air strikes.

I have no intention to write another history of World War II. Many others have written detailed accounts of their experiences and you may read similar accounts in books such as Ray Eisenhower's gunner's Jack Novey's book *The Wild Blue Sky*.

I stayed in the Air Force Reserve and retired with the rank of LtC. on December 1, 1982. I trained with the New Castle County Reserve unit on weekends while at Penn State and after graduation and was paid \$95 a weekend. That helped to pay my way through college along with the G.I. Bil benefits. The subsequent benefits in addition to pay are free prescription drugs and eye glasses. I also like visiting the P. X. and Commissary at the Carlisle Barracks. When traveling, we usually stay at an Air Force or Army base where rates in their hotels are quite reasonable. I could fly "space available" most anywhere in the world for free, but I have never taken advantage of this benefit. Staying in the reserve was one of the better choices I have made in this lifetime.

I'd like to thank all who contributed to making this book possible. My proofreaders, Mrs. Robert Wilson, Mrs. Maria Bickel, Ralph Mendenhall have made many corrections and contributions.

Mrs. Wilson suggested that I include a list of places that Lucy, Jonathan, and I have visited. Lucy spent a summer studying in Europe and consequently served as tour guide when we took a trip to Italy, Austria, Lichtenstein, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France and England in 1984.

Before our trip to Europe in 1984, we visited the World's Fair in New Orleans. We toured the superdome and the French Quarter and introduced us to benights. These French square doughnuts were simply

delicious and Jonathan and I couldn't get enough of them.

After we came home, we took a three day cruise to nowhere on the Norwegian Cruise Line flagship, *The Norway*. It is a 1034 foot long beautiful ship, which used to be *The France*. We sailed from Philadelphia and enjoyed the ship's food, shows, shops, and recreational facilities.



ties. Midnight buffets were especially elegant.

We flew to Italy on a chartered 747 jet for a nine country tour of Europe. We stayed in a hotel in Ostia which was Rome's seaport. We had our first genuine Italian pizza for supper.

The highlights of Rome were the coliseum, The Vatican, St. Peter's Square, the Sistine Chapel, Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain, and Tivoli Gardens. In Venice our gondola ride and the St. Mark's Square were memorable.

Our stop in Balogna resulted in no supper because we did not have enough Italian lire to pay the bill. Crossing the Dolomite mountains into Innsbruck with a stop in Cortina was different. Our first introduction to unisex toilets where men stood at urinals and women came in and out

of the stalls was unique. In Innsbruck, we had a show with native dancers and alpine horns in the second floor of some old building. I was scared that the floor would collapse from the vibrating of dozens of stamping feet.

In Lucerne, Jonathan and I went to see the town while Lucy stayed in the hotel room. She became frantic when she discovered that we had the key, and she could not unlock the door from the inside. Jonathan and I knew the feeling after the Florence episode. Florence was exciting. On a hill overlooking the city is a giant statue of David. Now if I had seen that before posing for Walter Stumpfig in college, I would have known what he wanted. Florence has the original pig statue like the one in Kansas City. The Cathedral and many good souvenir shops. We had to go to a restroom, so we went into a little eating place. Lucy ordered for us and sat at a table while Jonathan and I went to the toilet. Now we were locked in and couldn't open the door. We heard the people roaring with laughter as we kept pounding on the door and turning the door knob every which way but the right way. Finally, someone opened the door, and we never went to a bathroom in Florence again.

We spent a day in Geneva, and then it was off to Germany. We took a boat trip down the Rhine from St. Goar to Mainz, moving past the statue of the Loreley (the beautiful girl whose singing caused sailors to crack up their ships on the rocks) and past many castles on the hills was spellbinding. In Amsterdam, we toured the Anne Frank home. That is very depressing, but we also toured a cheese factory, wooden shoe factory, a diamond cutting factory, and the Allsmeer Flower Market.



The Brussels statue of Mannequin Pis was different. He has a different costume for every day of the year, and he has no problem with shooting a steady stream of water from his penis. He is an adorable little boy, and people gather around the fountain to watch him urinate. He couldn't do this in our country as he would have to wear a fig leaf.

We stopped inside the French border for a drink and French Fries. Those were the soggiest, greasiest, awfulest fries I've ever had. However, in Paris, there was a McDonald's, and they knew how to make American French Fries. Thank heavens for McDonald's and Pizza Hut. The food is always good, and we can depend on it no matter which country we're in.

The trip to the top of the Eiffel Tower (984 ft) was spectacular as it was a crystal clear day, and we could see for miles. Next we took a river boat ride on the Seine. As we rounded the island with Notre Dame Cathedral, we came upon a beach covered with topless sun bathers. We didn't avert our eyes as this is something we hadn't experienced at home. The Notre Dame Cathedral is just like in "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" but no hunch back. The stained glass windows and gargoyles were just like we'd pictured them after seeing movies of the Hunchback.

The palace of Louis the XIV (14th), the Sun King, at Versailles where the treaty ending WWI was signed June 28, 1919 in the hall of mirrors was beyond description. The rooms are decorated with colorful paintings and gold leaf.

The gardens and fountains are immaculate. It was off to England crossing the channel on a hovercraft. I had often seen the White Cliffs of Dover but not up this close.

In London, Jonathan climbed onto a Lion statue in Trafalgar square. (One of my better pictures.) We did the usual touristy things and came home. There's no place like home.

Lucy passed away November 14, 1986 after a battle with colon cancer, so Jonathan and I have traveled to many interesting places by ourselves. Traveling to other parts of the world, meeting people of different cultures and seeing things that we had read about in history or geography books is exciting and educational. As Calvin said to his friend the tiger Hobbes in his final comic strip episode "It's a big world out there, let's go exploring."

Our most memorable trip was to Kenya in 1987. Why Africa? The last movie we saw as a family was "Out of Africa" with Robert Redford, and Lucy loved it. Jonathan and I flew Lufthansa to Frankfurt, Germany,

had then on to Nairobi, Kenya. We stayed in the Nairobi Hilton, an elegant luxury hotel in the heart of downtown Nairobi.

Our second day was spent touring the city and vicinity. We visited Karen Blixen's house (pen name for Danish writer Isak Dinesen)



Jonathan feeds a giraffe at the Nairobi Game Preserve

which is located among colonial plantations along the outskirts of the city. We also visited the giraffe refuge where school children become aware of the need to conserve wildlife. They feed the giraffes and walk through the adjacent forest where 168 species of birds together with various mammals live. We did not know it at the time but a professional photographer was taking pictures for the World Wildlife conservation fund and Jonathan feeding a giraffe appeared in a brochure several months later. What a surprise! We also saw a show of native dancers and visited the natural history museum in Nairobi. People walk or run from place to place as busses are usually so crowded that it is impossible to get a ride.

The next day we drove to the Masai Mara game reserve. We were comfortably housed in a platform tent on an island in the Mara River. From here we toured in a four wheel driven SUV with a pop-up roof. The driver was allowed to drive off the road to observe game. There were hundreds of thousands of zebras and more than a million wildebeasts here in the Serengeti in the summer after migrating north from Tanzania.

Only six people and the driver who acted as tour guide were in each vehicle. He would stop the van and kill the engine so we could get

excellent pictures. Jonathan did the videotaping while I used a Konica 35mm camera. We traded cameras sometimes depending who had the best shots. We did see hundreds of wild animals in this "Garden of Eden." We were on the lookout for Africa's "big five", lions, elephants, Cape Buffalo, leopards, and rhinoceros. Cheetahs, giraffes, baboons, warthogs, hyenas, bat eared foxes, hippos etc. were quite abundant.

From Masai Mara, we traveled by bus to Lake Nakuru 86 miles northwest of Nairobi. It was a hot and dusty drive and by the time we got there I was ready for a cold drink. Almost a fatal mistake. I drank some of the lemonade with ice which was good at the time. At night I got severe diarrhea and vomiting at the same time.

I used up all my Lomotil tablets and some from fellow travellers. I felt better and could eat again in a couple days.

The big attraction at Nakuru is the flock of flamingos. Some call it the greatest bird spectacle on earth. The lake is a mass of pink color as maybe a million birds are feeding there. There are also 400 other bird species according to our guide.

Our next stop was Mt. Kenya National Park, which centers on the 17,000 foot peak. Our hotel was by a water hole, and we could watch the animals drink while only a short distance from them. We visited the Mt. Kenya Safari Club for lunch after leaving the lodge. The buffet was as elegant as anything one could imagine. The club, started by William Holden and Stephanie Powers, is a destination for rich people from around the world. It is on the equator at 37 degrees 7" E.

They have an animal shelter for orphaned and injured animals in a large compound and charge an additional \$50 to go in there. We thought it was part of the tour, but they didn't think so and wouldn't open the gate to let us out until we paid up.

Next we went to Tsavo, which is Kenya's largest wildlife park at 8000 square miles. It's divided into two parts, East and West. The highlight was going to Mzima Springs on a road which was little more than a trail. Our vans got stuck and everyone had to walk up the hill while the drivers rocked and pushed the vans out of the huge ruts.

At Mzima springs, we could go into an underwater structure with

portholes where we could observe the hippos at play. The place also had dozens of big crocodiles. The people of Mombassa 100 miles away get their drinking water from these springs. We visited a Masai village and were allowed to take pictures and enter a hut after our guide paid a bribe to the chief. The huts are cylindrical and after one enters a circular pathway leads to the entrance to the living quarters. I bought the chief's spear and have it as a souvenir.

Another time we stopped at a roadside rest. It was amusing to watch our fancy ladies go into the outhouses. There is nothing to sit on only a hole in the floor. I think some of the poor souls may have had trouble arising from a squatting position. We had been warned to carry our own toilet paper as they had no Sears Roebuck catalogs.

Amboseli National Park was our last stop and probably the most exciting. It's along the Tanzanian border with Mt. Kilimanjaro at 19,340 ft looming in the background. Here we could visualize Ernest Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" and the leopard at the 11,000 ft level. The mountain has snow year round on its flat topped peak. On one game run here we saw white and black rhinoceros. We came across a pride of lions feasting on a newly killed wildebeest. The dozens of wild elephants grazing in a big swamp reminded us that they eat 300lbs. a day and spent about 20 hrs a day grazing. The most exciting part was chasing after two Cheetahs who were chasing zebras and wildebeest. They did not catch one though they are said to be the fastest animal on earth.

The hotels in the parks are quite elegant and the food is really good. The British owned this country and their influence in everywhere.

And so it was off to the good old U.S.A., but we'd be ready to go again anytime because this was as close to the Garden of Eden as one can get.

In 1988, we took off for Egypt, England, and a cruise of the QE2. The thrill of first seeing the pyramids and then entering one and going into a burial chamber was beyond our wildest dreams. These places had been pictures in history books, but now we actually stood in awe of these monuments constructed 5000 years ago. How did they do it?

We enjoyed a sound and light show at the sphinx and then flew to Aswan. We could tour Abu-Simbel if we had the cash, no credit cards or checks. I had a money belt stuffed with cash so off we went by air across the Aswan High Dam to Abu Simbel. The temples would have been under water, but they were cut into pieces and re-assembled 200 ft above their previous home on the banks of Lake Nassar. One of these temples has four huge statues of Ramses II at its entrance. One of the figures has toppled.

Aswan market district has dress shops next door to butcher shops. They do not have refrigeration, and they kill the animal you choose, and you take it home. Here Jonathan had to have a very colorful gallabeya (a flowing cotton robe) which he wore while entertaining one night on our ship. Here we also visited the temple of Philae in Lake Nassar. This one was also moved to an island to prevent it from disappearing forever under the waters of the lake.

The first stop downriver was at Kom Ombo, a temple dedicated to Horus, the hawk-headed god and Suchos, the crocodile god. One room has mummified crocodiles stacked like cordwood.

Next stop was at Edfu where we had a carriage ride to the temple from the ship and then on to Esna. At Esna there is a lock which lowered our ship by 20 ft and then we proceeded to Luxor. Except for the Sphinx and pyramids the Valley of the Kings on the west bank of the Nile, Luxor is probably the most important tourist attraction in Egypt. First we visited the temple of Queen Hatshepsut in the Valley of the Queens. I guess they practiced segregation 5000 years ago as queens were not allowed to be buried with the kings.

The biggest thrill for me was going into King Tut's tomb. I had read about him and seen pictures in history books ever since I could remember anything. I guess it's because Howard Carter, an Englishman, discovered the tomb in 1922, the year I was born. Also, the Reading Museum has a reproduction of one of his chairs. If you want to see the solid gold mask and other good stuff you have to visit the Cairo Museum.

The temple of Karnak covers 60 acres and took more than 2000

years to build. It has giant columns and obelisks and was connected to the temple at Luxor via a broad sphinx lined street.

One night we bribed a guard to give us a private tour of King Farouk's private palace. We also went to a quarry to see how obelisks were made, transplanted to the Nile, placed on barges and floated down river to Cairo and Alexandria.

We took the overnight train to Cairo and flew to London a couple days later.

We made London our homebase for a week. We took a train to Norwich and visited David Hastings, who is on the board of directors for the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library. He attends 2nd Air Division reunions and gave us a tour of the old air base and a great dinner in his home. The tower, briefing buildings, and the old theater were still there. One day we took the train to Cambridge to visit the colleges and the American Cemetery at Madingly. Thousands of Americans are buried here while seamen and those whose bodies were never recovered have their names chisled on a long stone wall.

Back to London and a sidetrip to Windsor Castle, Stonehenge, Bath, and the Salisbury Cathedral. The British Museum was a block away from our hotel, and it was free. There we saw the Rosetta stone, which unlocked the translation of hieroglyphics into English. Also, the Elgin Marbles are placed around the top of several rooms. These are pieces of the frieze from the

The Queen Elizabeth 2



top of the Parthenon in Greece.

Lord Elgin had brought them to England as he realized they would deteriorate if left where they were. These are carvings in marble of events and people of Greece 2000 years earlier. We again visited the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, Picadilly Circus, Buckingham Palace, and Churchill's war room.

We flew to New York City and crashed at my niece's apartment at 400 West 43rd St. The next day we walked three blocks to the docks, toured the Intrepid (a World War II aircraft carrier) and waited for boarding time for the Queen Elizabeth 2. The QE2 sailed at 5 PM with balloons, bells, whistles, and many happy people. This was a three day cruise to nowhere. The ship herself was destination enough with swimming pools, exercise rooms, movies, lounges, live entertainment and continuous dining. It was great to look at all the good stuff at the midnight buffet, but who could eat much since we had dinner at 6. One fellow at our table was 84 years old traveling by himself. I wondered what they'd do with him if he had a heart attack.

1989 saw us off to Tahiti, Australia, New Zealand, and Figi for a month. Highlight of Tahiti was our stay on Moorea, an island right out James's Michener's *South Pacific*. Water was crystal clear, and Jonathan tried to sailboard without too much success.

We flew first class to New Zealand on a 747. From there, it was off to Melbourne and a trip to Phillip Island to see the fairy penguins. We also saw our first wild koalas in trees enroute. After touring the city for several days, we boarded a 757 and flew to Alice Springs. The interior of Australia is as desolate as our great basin out West. Jonathan climbed Ayers Rock and entered his name in the book on top of the rock. We encountered our first aborigines, who could scare the daylights out of you, in Alice Springs. They are supposed to have come from the mainland 40,000 years ago and are trying to hold on to their culture.

Next we flew to Cairns and boarded the train for the ride to Kurunga. Here the aborigines presented a show of native dances and played the dickerados for us. They also have the largest butterfly sanctuary in Australia.

The following day we boarded a “Quicksilver” catamaran for a trip to the “Great Barrier Reef.” Jonathan did 98% of the snorkeling among thousands of fish which came to feed upon the food dumped into the water alongside the ship. The ship was porthole windows below the water line so I got excellent pictures of Jonathan swimming with the fishes.

The next day it was off to Sydney for several days of exploration of the Opera House, the harbor, and a nearby nature preserve. Here native animals and birds could be fed, petted and photographed.

Our flight to Christchurch in the South Island of New Zealand took us over the Cook Mountains. They call these the Swiss Alps of New Zealand. After a day in the city we boarded a bus for Queenstown. We were delayed at times by hundreds of sheep blocking the highway. We took a ride on a passenger jet boat on the “Shotover” river. These boats have 454 cubic inch Chevy engines and are incredibly fast (50 MPH). The drivers travel within inches of the cliffs and delight in making 360 degrees turns.

We traveled to Te Anau and boarded a cruise ship for a tour of Milford Sound. Mitre Peak at 1695 meters dominates the landscape in the beginning of the trip. Sheer cliffs and sparkling water falls are the main attractions along with sea lions and otters.

We flew to Rotorua. Our exciting ride was taking a ski lift to the top of a mountain and riding a go-kart down a paved highway about 12 ft. wide. This area is like our Yellowstone with many geysers and hot springs. The Maoris did a native dance and entertained us at our hotel. We were also entertained at a sheep ranch with border collies herding sheep and experts shearing sheep.

From here it was off to Auckland for a few days before going to Fiji. Here Jonathan did learn to sailboard, and we had a parasail ride. The ride was great. The landing was not so great as I tore several tendons upon landing on the beach. After we got home, arthroscopic surgery patched it up. I’d recommend landing in water. That was a great month long trip.

Our trip in 1990 was to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Seeing the Little Mermaid, Elsinore Castle, Tivoli gardens etc. was right out of a Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale. Russia was exciting as the Hermitage and the Czars’s summer palace in St. Petersburg are beyond description. Visiting the Nobel Peace Hall in Stockholm and the Warship Wasa, which sank in 1628 and was raised in 1961 was a highlight in Swe-



Jonathan and I sit on some solidified lava on Kilauea

den. The McDonalds in Helsinki was a sight for sore eyes after the Russian food. Double cheeseburgers and fries never tasted better. Norway was famous for its fiords and World War II museum in Oslo.

On July 29th, 1991, we headed for Honolulu, Hawaii. We had half price reservations at the Polynesian,

but we were upgraded to the Alii Towers. We rented a car and toured the island of Oahu. Our first stop was at the Polynesian Cultural Center to see the native dancers perform. We continued around the island and came through the pineapple growing district on the way back to Honolulu. The next day we toured the Pearl Harbor area and took the boat to the Arizona Memorial. The outline of the ship can be seen just beneath the surface of the water and the oil slick from the leaking hull will continue to attract tourists for a long time to come. We enjoyed the beach and the Royal Hawaiian shopping center, which was close to our hotel. Red Foxx also was a guest and looked just like he did in his TV series, Sanford and Son. Jonathan went snorkeling in Hanauma Bay with two school teachers from California we met on the plane.

We flew to the Big Island of Hawaii, which is sometimes called the Volcano Island. It is 93 miles long, 76 miles wide and home to 114,000 people. Kilauea is the world's most active volcano and we drove along

the coastal highway until we arrived at the point where lava covered the highway. We could see the hot, molten lava moving into the sea and that was as close as we dared to go. We saw macadamia nut trees by the hundreds and took pictures of the nearly ripened nut pods. The next day we drove through the heart of the cattle ranching country, which is mostly owned by the Parker Ranch and is like our western cowboy states of Montana and Wyoming.

We spent three days at the Westin Maui along the Kaanapali Beach. The hotel is quite elegant and has a pool with a small mountain with sliding boards connected to the five different levels. We also took trips to Lahaina. We checked out the giant Banyan tree and took a tram ride through a pineapple plantation. Most of the time we were on the beach or in the pool.

Kauai was my favorite island. We stayed at the Westin Kauai Lagoons hotel, which boasts the largest pool in Hawaii. It seems to be about three quarters of an acre and is never crowded. The highlight of this stay was an hour helicopter tour of the island. The pilot took us up close to the jagged cliffs, and it was nerve wracking though we made it back alive. We also took the boat ride up the Waima River to the grotto.

Back to Oahu and two nights at the armed forces hotel Hale Koa on Waikiki Beach at Fort DeRussey. We treated Ken and Larry to elegant Sunday brunch and departed for L.A.

In Los Angeles, we rented a car and checked out the Queen Mary, Spruce Goose, Knots Berry Farm, and Disney Land. It was a great trip, and we have a lot of pictures, video tapes, and happy memories.

1994 was highlighted by a trip to Greece and a cruise to Turkey. Crete, Ephesus, Santorini, Corinth, Rhodes, and Myconos. Our hotel was a block away from the entrance to the Acropolis was built over ancient ruins which were preserved in the lower level. The Parthenon and porch of the maidens were impressive. We had visited the Parthenon in Nashville, TN. which is a replica of the original complete with the friezes and the statue of Diana. It is too bad that the original was partially destroyed when the powder magazine used by the Turks blew up. We went to the museum and enjoyed the displays of old statues and pieces

of art. We also liked the town square with its McDonalds before going shopping in the Plaka. Our ship, the Olympic, sailed out of Piraeus for Istanbul.

The entertainment and food were superb. The first sight of Istanbul was thrilling as we sailed through the Dardenelles and the straight of Marmara. The spires, domes, and minarets, of the many mosques were like a page out of the Arabian Nights. It was here that Europe and Asia meet by walking across the International Bridge. We spent a day visiting the Blue Mosque and the Red Hagia Sofia across the street, which is now a museum. Here are many Christian mosaics which had been painted over by the Muslims when they took over the church. Now they are being uncovered and are quite beautiful.

We visited the Topkapi Palace of Sulieman the Great, his great and vast collection of blue dishes, precious gems, sacred relics among them the mantle of the prophet Mohammed and the hand, arm and skull bones of John the Baptist.

We sailed for Ephesus and were taken by bus to the top of the city. A lot of excavation has been done and is on going. The Celsus Library facade is still standing and is at the bottom of the hill. A turn to the right took us to the 25,000 seat amphitheater where St. Paul preached.

Our next step was Rhodes and Lindos. This is where the Colossus stood spanning the harbor. He was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. We were shown a harbor at Lindos where Paul was supposed to have been shipwrecked. Part of the temple of Athena still stands on the rock of the Acropolis of Lindos. The natives are experts at making beautiful ceramic plates and we brought one home as a souvenir.

Patmos, the sacred island where St. John wrote the book of Revelation or the Apocalypse, was our next stop. In 95 AD Evangelist John was sent into exile for 18 months on this island. In this time he dictated the Book of Revelation, to his servant Prohoros, who wrote everything down. The cave where all this happened is now part of a large Monastery. St. John returned to Ephesus after his exile and looked after Mary, mother of Jesus until her death.

Crete and Knosos were fascinating to me since I had read all about Thesus and the Minotaur and now had a chance to explore the palace and labyrinth. The paintings and mosaics have been restored as they were 2500 to 3000 years ago.

Next, off to Santorini. This island is famous for its white houses on top of sheer cliffs. It's also the site of excavations at Thera Acrotiri. The island is thought to be near where the City of Atlantis was before it sank into the sea many years ago. We walked to the top of the hill and took the elevator down the cliff for a tender to take us back to the ship. Constructed on the top of the mountain, the island has to bring in fresh water by ship as there is not enough on the island for the inhabitants.

After a short trip in our ship, we arrived in Mykonos. The houses are snow white with blue roofs. The main attraction was the hill with seven windmills. We returned to the ship and went back to Athens and our hotel at the Divani Palace. The next day we took a one day bus trip to Corinth and Epidaurus. All these cities were written about by St. Paul, which made them extremely interesting. On the trip from Greece to Italy, we flew over the Vatican and I got excellent pictures from my seat in the plane. This was a Globus tour and everything was great. We learned and saw many new things. All in all, a quite educational tour.

1996 was a year to visit friends in Germany and travel through Switzerland and Austria. We arrived in Frankfurt about 6 am and proceeded to check out our rental car. The car had a 1.8 liter 4 cylinder engine which sipped gasoline and buzzed right along. Gas was \$1.30 a liter compared to \$1.30 a gallon back home. The gas guage measured in liters and a fill up lasted a long time.

We went south to Heidelberg and visited the castle again. We had been there in '84, but it's still an imposing sight on the top of the hill overlooking the city. The castles were built on the top of hills and mostly impregnable until the invention of gunpowder and cannon. The French were responsible for destroying most of the castles along the Rhine though some have been rebuilt and are used as museums or bed and breakfasts. We spent the night in Heidelberg after checking out the commissary and PX at the army base. Army bases are located in former

German Army Bases and are now American islands in the heart of Germany. All the things found in a grocery store or department store in the states can be found here. They only take American money and will not accept funny “German” money. Our government has an agreement with the Germans forbidding sales to retirees so we were not allowed to make purchases in their stores.

The next day we drove to Hochstadt where we stayed with Heintz and Anita Schweder at Hauptstrasse 211. They had come to visit the Host church near Bernville with a tour group and visited us while in the United States . Heintz is a government employee but has a grape growing and wine making business on the side. They treated us like royalty and took us to visit the Feigs in Neustadt. Mr. Feig owns a trucking business and had recently completed a new house. He used his van to take us to Hambach castle overlooking the wine growing region of the Palatinate. People and farmers live in towns and go out to cultivate their land. They do not allow developing on their rich farmland.

Heintz showed us his vineyards and wine making equipment. He showed us the wine cellar where the wine is kept before bottling and had samples of various wines. He distributes his wines throughout Germany.

Monday we followed him into Speyer, and he showed us his office. After giving us fresh soft pretzels, we said good by and headed South on the autobahn. Jonathan loved to see the speedometer needle climb above 100 and hit 120 but this was in kilometers per hour so we really were only going 75 to 80 mph. We stayed in a hotel in Switzerland, and the next morning we headed for Zermatt and the Matterhorn.

No cars are allowed in Zermatt so we parked the car and took the train. Our first stop was McDonald's. They have clean restrooms and serve ice in their Cokes. No one seems to serve ice as they like warm drinks. The weather was crystal clear, so we took the tram to the top of the little Matterhorn. There was snow on all the mountains from France, Italy, and Austria. Skiers were enjoying the great skiing conditions, but we had to move on.

We went East to Austria. I got a speeding ticket in a tunnel which

had a lowered speed limit. Luckily, I had enough money to pay the fine. I couldn't understand them but I paid whatever amount they wrote on a piece of paper and we were on our way to Garmish in Germany.

Garmish, located in the southeastern corner of Germany, is a quaint little town near the Spitzberg (the highest peak in Germany). We arrived about 4 p.m. and were given the V.I.P. suite at the army camp since no very important people were scheduled for that night. We went into town and met Capt. Dennis Gibson and his family unexpectedly. They were members of our church and he was giving his family a tour of Germany.

The next day we visited Oberammergau and toured the Passion Play theater. Next we toured King Ludwig II of Bavaria's Neuschwanstein Castle. This is the fairy tale castle which is said to be the model for Disney's Cinderella castle in Disney World, Orlando. It is breath taking with its spires and towers on the outside and its lavish interior wood carvings and paintings of operatic and legendary themes. King Ludwig liked swans and decorated the castle with statues and paintings in every room. Some people called him mad, but now people are recognizing him as a genius.

The next stop was at Linderhof castle. This was King Ludwig's favorite castle, a tribute to King Louis XIV of France. His bedroom faced a hill with cascading waterfalls. He also had a trapdoor dining table which came up from the floor beneath with all the food. When he was finished eating, the table went down and the floor became a floor again. Here he also had a cave and lake with a swan boat and a Moorish kiosk. He also had a spectacular artificial cave complete with running water. In front of the castle and lakes are fountains.

We traveled onto Chiemsee, another armed forces recreation center, about 50 miles south east of Munich on the road to Salzburg, Austria. This was one of Adolf Hitler's favorite hangouts and is quite elegant. It's about 20 miles from Berchtesgaden, the location of Hitler's Eagle's Nest. Our room was on the lake and the third King Ludwig castle called Herren Chiemsee. The castle is on an island in the lake and can be reached by ferry boat. It's a replica of the King Louis' palace at Ver-

sailles complete with a hall of mirrors. The King Ludwig palaces do not contain images of the King but many paintings and statues of Louis XIV of France. Again, the gardens and fountains are spectacular.

The next day we toured the Eagles Next. We had to take the bus up a narrow winding road to a parking space. A tunnel bored into the hill leads to an elevator and then to the top. (Like the one in Whiteface Mt. in New York.) They have a refreshment, souvenir shop and rest rooms. Views of the Bavarian Alps are breathtaking.

A tour of Salzburg and Mozart's birthplace completed the traveling for the day.

The next day we were off to Munich and a tour of the BMW museum next to the Olympic stadium. The city hall and the "Glockenspiel" in the center square are the highlights here. We visited the Dachau concentration camp and saw the crematorium where people were cremated after being gassed. Only two of the barracks buildings were still there, but the huge building used by guards and officers is now a museum. The big letters "Arbeit Macht Frei" are still over the entrance where trains brought prisoners. This was Hitler's first concentration camp, but he built many more.

Our next stop was in Nuremberg to visit the stadium where Hitler mesmerized the crowd with his fiery oratory. On to visit Ulrich Geissler's and family at Gut Siglohe, 88-59 Rimmertstshofen Donau Neuberg, Germany 08434311. Ulrich had been an exchange student at Northern Lebanon and a member of our FFA chapter. He has a small fiefdom, including a private church on his farm. He and his wife Elka and daughter Inka treated us like royalty. We stayed at the base at Würzburg two days, continued to Frankfurt and flew home.

1998 was our trip to Alaska. I had enough frequent flier miles to get a free trip to Anchorage. Jonathan's ticket was \$660. We made our own travel arrangements and spent a total of \$3300 and saw more than steamship tourists did for \$10,000.

After a night in Anchorage, we boarded the Alaskan Railroad train for the 356 mile trip to Fairbanks. The first three cars were for people not connected to the tour groups. One of our cars was a dome car, so we could enjoy the scenery enroute. We stayed overnight near the entrance

to Denali Park. The next day we took a tour bus into the park on a game run. Game was scarce as we only saw a moose and a few sheep, and so it was back on the 4:00 p.m. train for Fairbanks.

We rented a car and headed for Ft. Wainwright where we stayed while in Fairbanks. We took the sternwheeler riverboat *Discovery III* for a scenic trip down the Chena and Tanana Rivers. Enroute we were treated to a dogsled demonstration and an Indian lady fileting salmon and smoking them. We stopped at a village where we were given demonstrations on dog sled racing (on wheels) and many Indian customs and clothes.

Next day we visited the Alaskan Pipeline Golddredge No. 5 where we panned for gold. The dredge is abandoned but is open for tourists. We found some flakes but no big nuggets. It was fun regardless, and we could see how people could get “gold fever.”

Fairbanks has a population of 75,000; it is a university town and supply port for North Slope oil fields. The university has a great museum with “Blue Babe”, an Alaskan Steppe Bison as its chief attraction. The Babe is one of several extinct mammals that roamed the interior of Alaska 400,000 to 10,000 years ago. This bison died about 36,000 years ago, and its frozen carcass was uncovered in 1979 in a gold mine near Fairbanks. It’s amazingly well preserved and was one of my favorite displays. From the front of the museum, one can get a great view of Mt. McKinley. We also toured the city and had the best halibut we ever had at a park on the outskirts of the city.

We flew back to Anchorage and drove to Whittier where we took the 26 glacier cruise. It was quite spectacular as our small ship went right up to the glaciers. It was \$122 per person, but dinner came along with that price. We stayed at the Aleskya Prince hotel, which is a super hotel with great ski slopes as the main attraction.

We also visited the Iditarod Headquarters and a Musk Ox Farm in Palmer. They are shaggy miniature buffalo with extremely fine hair from which yarn is spun. Caps, shawls, and other products are for sale in the gift shop. They are very expensive. After visiting the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Wasilla, we flew to San Francisco and caught the red eye express to B.W.I. and home.

2000 was highlighted by Jonathan's wedding. On July 22, he and Maria Piscitelli were married. They had known each other from high school activities and had a beautiful ceremony at St. Ignatius Catholic Church in West Lawn. They had a great honeymoon in the Turks and Caicos Islands in the British West Indies.

In 2001, Jonathan, Maria, Matt Wolfe and I went to Florida for a theme park vacation. We checked out Disney World- the Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Animal Kingdom, MGM Studios, Universal Studios, Sea World, and Cape Canaveral. We also took a ride on an airboat and visited Gatorland and Splendid China. It was quite an educational experience for all of us.

In 2002 Jonathan, Matt, and I visited three theme parks: Six Flags at Lagos, Md., Kings Dominion at Doswell, Va. and Busch Gardens at Williamsburg, Va. We also toured Williamsburg and Jamestown to visit the historic sites.

For 2003, Jonathan and I visited Lake Placid, Saranac Lake and Loon Lake in New York state. The hotel had burned down but my old dormitory building was still there. In Canada we visited the Bombardier Ski Doo Snowmobile factory and St. Anne De Beaupre Cathedral before going to the Manoir Richelieu at Murray Bay. We had the buffet dinner, which was out of this world. The old swimming pool has a casino in its spot, and we never did see the new pool, though I am sure they have one. On the way home, we explored the Plains of Abraham in Quebec City, the Ben and Jerry Ice Cream factory, and the Vermont Country

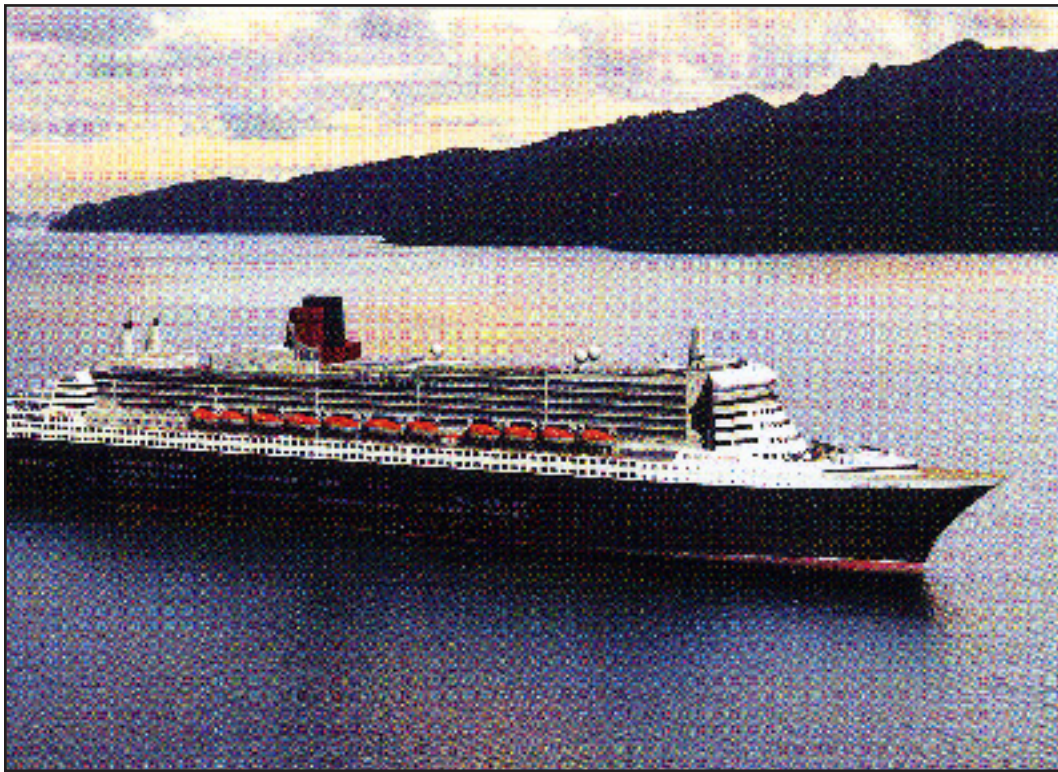


Store.

The highlight of 2003 was the arrival of my first grandchild. Lucy Marie arrived the day after Christmas and was a beautiful, healthy, baby girl.

2004 - Jonathan, Matt, and I went to N.Y.C. on Wednesday, June 30. We inspected the World Trade Center site and then walked to the South Street Seaport. We took a subway uptown to 42nd St. and went to the matinee of *The Lion King*. We enjoyed the show from the cheap seats in the upper balcony. Toys R Us was our next stop and then the Hershey outlet store. Jonathan purchased a 5 lb Hershey bar for Maria and then we had dinner at Tad's Steak House. We stayed in June's apartment for the night.

We walked west to the docks the next morning and took the Circle Line Cruise around Manhattan. We couldn't go all the way because of



Cruise to nowhere on the Queen Mary 2 on July 1 -5, 2004

bridge repairs in the East River, though we got close to the Statue of Liberty and did go as far as the Williamsburg Bridge.

At 2 p.m. it was time to board the Queen Mary 2 for a five day cruise to nowhere. The ship is the largest passenger lines ever built and is 1132 ft long and 209 ft high above the water line.

The ship cost \$800 million and weighs more than 150,000 tons. It is a floating city with stage shows, a planetarium, casino, pools, exercise rooms, shops, 14 buffet outlets and 3 main dining rooms. We ate in the Britannia room, which seats 1200 plus at a sitting. Richer people were

assigned to the Queens dining room and for an extra \$30 per person per meal one could eat in the Todd English dining room overlooking the stern. Time passed quickly, and July 4 we watched the fireworks at Newport, R.I. We disembarked at 10 a.m. on July 5 and were home by 3 p.m. This was an unforgettable experience, and we had a great trip.